



# RIVERS TO ENJOY

A Plan  
For Enjoyment  
Of Wild River Segments  
Of the Rio Grande  
And the Red River  
In New Mexico . . .



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT





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This plan is the result of a study by the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service in cooperation with the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the New Mexico State Parks and Recreation Commission.

# INTRODUCTION

One of the country's great rivers, the Rio Grande, rises in the snowfields of the Rocky Mountains in south-central Colorado and journeys 1,900 miles to the Gulf of Mexico, passing through New Mexico and Texas.

Early in its journey through a broad sagebrush valley in New Mexico, the river slips into a basalt-rimmed trench 50 miles long and 300 to 800 feet deep. During this passage, the river withdraws from man, renewing itself in rapids and pools, soaking up oxygen and wildness. It descends about 1,500 feet in 50 miles, polishing basalt to glass-like smoothness, sheltering and feeding giant trout.

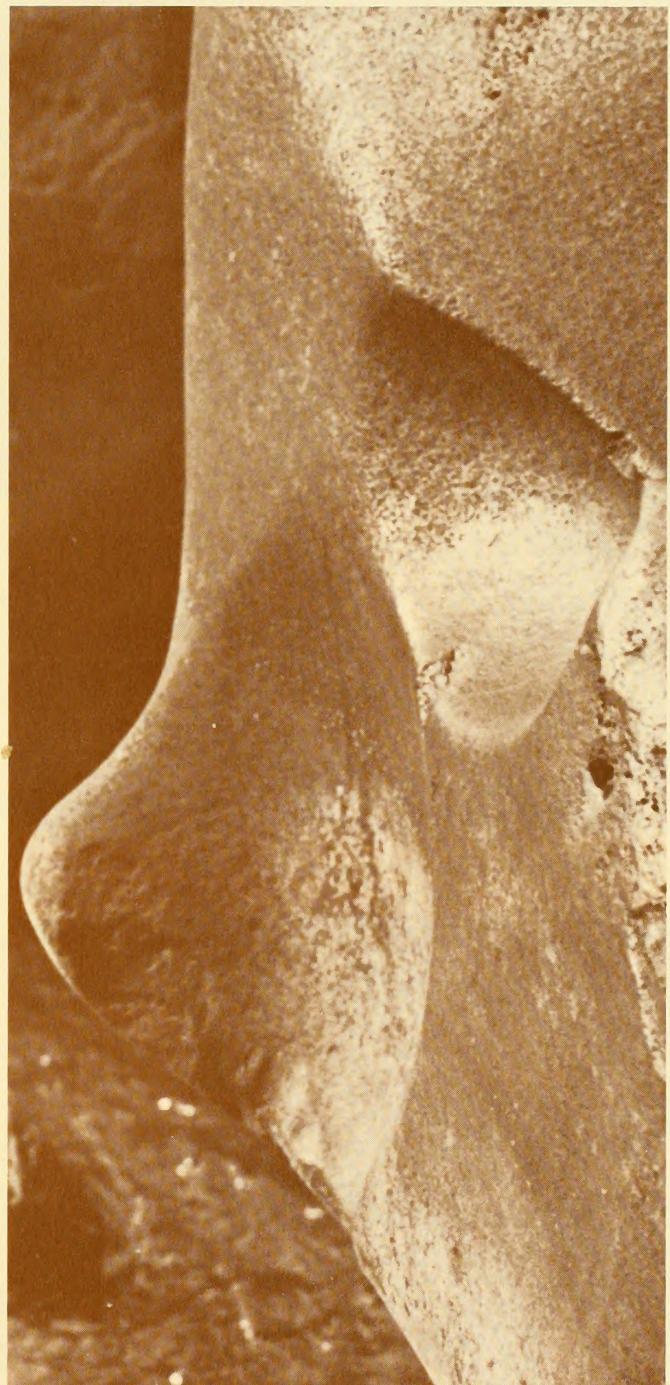
Eagles nest and hunt along the rims. Into their wild domain venture fishermen, nature lovers and numerous wild animals.

## Ribbon of Life

When the river reaches El Paso, Texas, about one-third of the length of its journey to the sea, it becomes the international boundary between Mexico and the United States.

Because the Rio Grande passes, like a ribbon of life, through a big and semi-arid region, Spanish conquistadores moving north from Mexico recognized the importance of the river and named it "El Rio Grande del Norte" -- the great river of the north.

Only in its wild trench does the river today resemble the river of history. Virtually inaccessible, long stretches of the river are fed here by generous springs and four small tributaries -- Red River, San Cristobal creek, the Arroyo Hondo, and Taos creek. These tributaries rise in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico paralleling the gorge to the east. No waters flow into the gorge from the west except runoff from rain and snow. At times farmers in Colorado almost drain the river before it enters New Mexico.



*The Rio Grande -- and time -- shaped and polished this volcanic rock*

## Few Trails Cross

Vehicle crossings of the gorge have been few. They were limited until recently for all practical purposes to two. Those were the John Dunn bridge at the mouth of the Arroyo Hondo and the Taos Junction bridge at the mouth of Taos creek. Another crossing was in use for a time at Manby Spring about two miles south of the John Dunn bridge.

Trails crossed the river during low water at Chiflo, Cedar Springs, and at half a dozen unnamed locations. Such crossings were infrequent and hazardous.

Four years ago a high bridge was completed west of Taos, 4.3 miles south of the John Dunn crossing.

Red River breaks briefly from Red River canyon at Questa, flows rapidly through a small mountain valley of wheatgrass meadows and narrowleaf cottonwoods, and plunges into a deepening gorge of its own before joining the Rio Grande. The lower four miles of Red River match the Rio Grande gorge in depth and primitive character. Because of this, these four miles were included as wild river along with 48 miles of the Rio Grande.

## Arroyo Hondo Enters

San Cristobal creek lies between Red River and Arroyo Hondo creek. It drains a small area and is a small stream. However, it sustains wildlife and a few fields and homes before spilling into the gorge.

The Arroyo Hondo enters the gorge gently after laughing its way through a mile-wide valley of wheatgrass pastures and small farms.

Taos creek flows through historic Taos pueblo and nearby town of Taos before leaving the sagebrush plain to sink into a deep canyon and join the Rio Grande where the Rio's trench widens abruptly. This is the point at which the wild river designation of the Rio Grande ends, and where streamside automobile travel begins. It also is the location of Highway 96, the Taos Junction bridge, and the southernmost vehicle crossing of the gorge.

## Rio Grande State Park

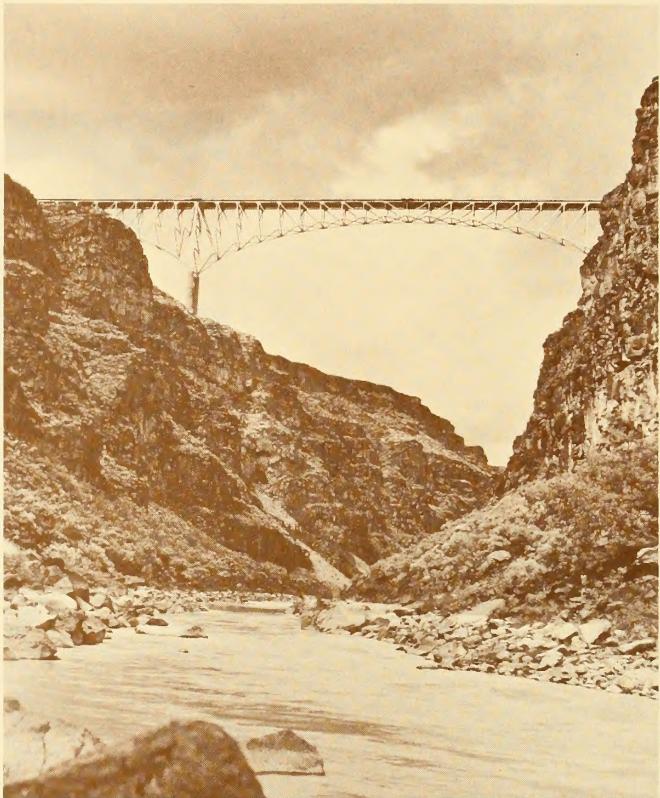
Indian tribes lived -- and still live -- along the Rio Grande and Red River. There have been men from Spain and fur trappers and settlers. In the wild depths of their gorges, the rivers still bring back these yesterdays, drawing the adventurous to one of the continent's great fisheries and a primitive world beneath their rims.

In 1959 the New Mexico State Legislature included the area in "Rio Grande State Park," an area designated primarily to express the State's concern and desire for the protection and preservation of the wild beauty of the gorge.

In 1968, the U.S. Congress included 50 miles of the Rio Grande -- that part containing the gorge -- and the lower four miles of Red River, in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The Act required submission of a plan by October 2, 1969, for the necessary development and for administration of the designated portions of the specified rivers.

This is that plan.



*The spectacular Rio Grande Gorge High Bridge*



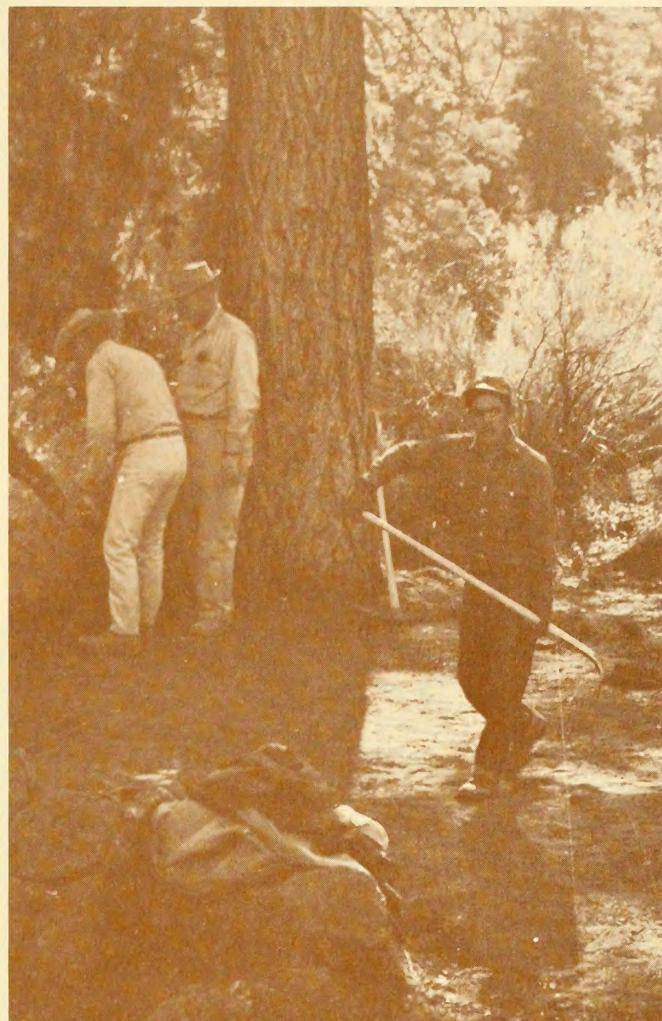
*Arroyo Hondo joins Rio Grande*



*A Californian in Rio Grande State Park*

## CLASSIFICATIONS INTENDED

Approximately 98 percent of the Rio Grande within the designated area and its immediate environment qualify for wild river classification and that is proposed. The remaining 2 per cent qualifies for recreation river classification, and this too is proposed. No scenic river classifications for these rivers are proposed.



## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Preservation of a wild river area creates certain conflicts as to immediate vs. long-term pressures for non-compatible resource uses. We will allow multiple wild river area uses provided neither their short-range nor long-range impacts lessen the esthetic and scenic values for which the river was designated "wild." The need is great to guard the wild river character of the area against nibbling encroachment, however well-meaning.

Another objective will be correlation among agencies to insure that each wild river component is administered to serve the same end -- preservation and enhancement of the wild river values.

We will exclude, except under certain prescribed conditions and for certain restricted purposes, the use of motorized equipment and aircraft.

We will provide recreation development and opportunities to the extent needed to meet expected reasonable demands so long as such development does not impair wild river qualities. Facilities so provided should be of first quality. They should be limited to simple campgrounds, picnic areas, and supporting facilities. Extensive development, if any, should be outside the wild river boundaries.

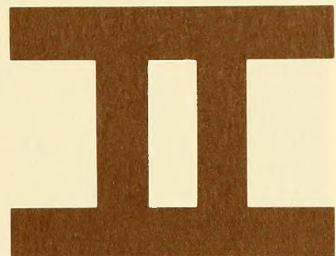
## PROSPECTIVE BLM COSTS

<b>Annual Recurring Costs</b>	\$ 55,000
Operation and Maintenance (Including salaries and related expense for three permanent recreation specialists and 68 man months of seasonal laborers, supplies and vehicle expense.)	
<b>Equipment (One-time cost)</b>	\$ 13,500
(Including radio, wheel-type tractor, and minimum office equipment)	
Headquarters building storage and yards	\$ 60,000
<b>Land Acquisition</b>	
(1,425 acres in six parcels)	\$ 60,000
<b>Recreation Development</b>	\$ 500,000
(Including \$ 5,000 for signs)	
<b>Road Construction</b>	\$ 1,310,000
(Including 14 miles of new construction realignment and paving of 11 miles of existing road.)	
<b>Range Improvements</b>	\$ 14,000
<b>OTHER AGENCY COSTS</b> (SEE PART III, AND TAOS INDIAN REFERENCE, PAGE 21)	

## STAFFING NEEDS

The BLM portion of the Wild River Area will be operated and maintained by a competent staff under the direction and supervision of the BLM Albuquerque District Manager. The staff should include at least three supervisors and sufficient maintenance and cleanup men. In the 50-mile long area, most of these persons must be mobile, regularly patrolling the developed sites.





# THE RESOURCE - ITS NATURE, ITS USES, AND ITS PROMISE

## THE WATER

Stream flows of the Rio Grande and Red River, within the Wild River Area, during normal years, range in width from 50 to 125 feet, occasionally constricted to less than 15 feet between large boulders. Seasonal fluctuations in width are not pronounced.

Depth is variable. There are hundreds of potholes ranging to depths of 20 feet and more. Seasonal fluctuations generally produce a five-foot variation in depth. Maximum depths coincide with the spring runoff and with intense summer thunderstorms.

Streamflows in the Rio Grande are affected by four conditions: (1) snowpack in the mountainous headwaters; (2) rainfall during intense summer storms; (3) upstream diversions for irrigation in the San Luis Valley, Colorado; and (4) accretion from the ground-water table. Because the Rio Grande and Red River are deeply entrenched, there are no diversions of water from the Wild River Area.

Data compiled by six Geological Survey stream-flow gauges in the canyon show maximum flows in the Rio Grande above the Red River generally occur during May, June, and July. Maximum flows below the Red River generally occur in April, May, and June. Highest average river level is in May and June. Low flows generally occur in September and October.

Accretion from springs accounts for a considerable portion of the flow of the Rio Grande within the Wild River Area. Total accretion to the Rio Grande and Red River between the Lobatos gauging station in Colorado and the confluence of these rivers is about 80,000 acre-feet per year. Data compiled by the New Mexico State Engineer and the Geological Survey indicate that during the seven-year period, 1948 through 1955, accretion provided 6 to 40 percent of the annual flow at the Cerro gauge and 10 to 55 percent of the flow just above the mouth of Red River.

Accretion during months of lowest flow ranges from 25 to 97 percent at the Cerro gauge. Seepage and spring activity are greatest between Ute Mountain and Red River. Average increases in water flows range from 3.3 cfs to 6.2 cfs per linear mile.



The long-term trend for water availability in the Rio Grande canyon is excellent. This outlook is based upon the following:

Presence of a large underground reservoir which assures continued minimum spring flow under existing and expected conditions.

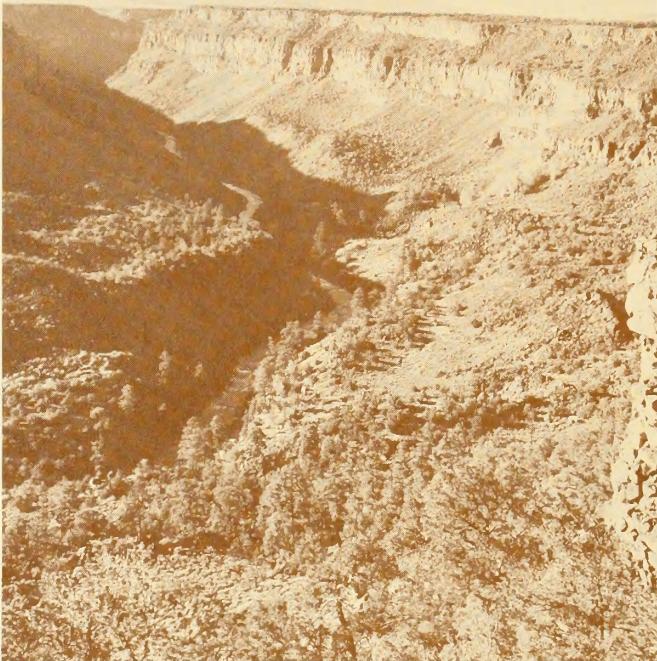
Prior downstream water commitments and legal requirements will tend to prevent taking water from the Wild River Area.

No department or agency of the United States may recommend authorization of any water resources project that would have a direct and adverse effect on the values for which this wild river was established (Public Law 90-542, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act).

The Closed Basin Division of the San Luis Valley Project in Colorado will salvage and deliver about 100,000 acre-feet of "new" water annually to the Rio Grande above the Wild River Area.

## THE CLIMATE

Weather data from a recording station at Cerro are believed to be typical for the Wild River Area. This station is at an elevation of 7,665 feet. Annual precipitation averages 13.22 inches, of which 51 percent falls during July, August, September, and October. August is the wettest month, with an average of 2.13 inches of rain. Heavy, localized thunderstorms are common during the summer. Snowfall averages about 53.6 inches annually. Maximum snowfall generally occurs from November through April, with heaviest snows in December and March (averaging 9.3 and 10.8 inches, respectively).



## THE WATER (CONTINUED)

Water quality within the Wild River Area is generally very good. The drainage of the Rio Grande basin above Pilar contributes comparatively little sediment to the downstream areas. Suspended sediment at the Colorado-New Mexico State line is about 150 acre-feet annually. Concentrations of soluble salts are relatively low. Water temperatures are moderate and are such that a State trout hatchery is maintained in the Red River drainage. During the late summer, algae produce "mossy" conditions at places in the Rio Grande. A series of springs mis-named "Arsenic Springs" is located along the east wall of the canyon about two miles above Red River. These springs produce water of sufficient volume, quality, and temperature that they create a superb natural trout fishery.

Waters in the upper Rio Grande generally clear after spring runoff. However, rapid but temporary changes in turbidity are possible downstream from the Red River after summer rainstorms. Conversely, heavy rainstorms in the upper portion of the Rio Grande could produce murky conditions while the Red River remains clear. Clearing from this type of a storm generally takes two to four days.

There are no communities using water from the Rio Grande in the Wild River Area for domestic purposes, nor does it appear likely that there will be any such use in the future. Tributary streams, the Rio Hondo, Rio Taos, and Red River are subject to varying degrees of pollution. All such pollution to date is unrelated to industry except Red River, which receives decent water from mine tailings.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Rio Grande Wild River Area is situated entirely within the boundaries of Taos county in north-central New Mexico. The county is roughly 78 miles north and south by 38 miles east and west. It is bounded on the north by Costilla county, Colorado; on the west and south by Rio Arriba county, New Mexico; and on the east by Mora and Colfax counties, New Mexico. The town of Taos, near the center of the county, is the county seat and principal population center. The Rio Grande crosses the county north to south and divides the county into roughly equal halves.

## LOCAL GEOLOGY

The Rio Grande trough was formed by complex geologic processes involving uplift, faulting, and a series of overlapping andesite-basalt lava flows. Ute Mountain and Cerro de la Olla, which extend above these lava flows to elevations of 10,120 and 9,450 feet are striking examples of extinct volcanoes.

Four miles north of the Colorado-New Mexico boundary, the Rio Grande enters a deep gorge bisecting the lava-capped basin. This entrenchment continues southward 70 miles before entering the Velarde valley near the village of Embudo. The Wild River Area encompasses only that portion between the state line and the Taos Junction bridge, about 50 river miles. Total drainage area is 7,000 square miles.

The Red River rises on the western slopes of the Sangre de Cristo mountains and contributes the only appreciable flow of surface water to the Rio Grande within the Wild River Area. The confluence of the Red River with the Rio Grande occurs 18 miles northwest of Taos. Since the lower four-mile portion of Red River is deeply entrenched and has characteristics similar to those found in the Rio Grande trench, it was included within the Wild River Area.

Width and depth of the Rio Grande canyon are relatively uniform, being slightly shallower to the north. The widest and deepest portion is near the Rio Grande-Red River confluence.

# RIO GRANDE GORGE DIMENSIONS - WILD RIVER

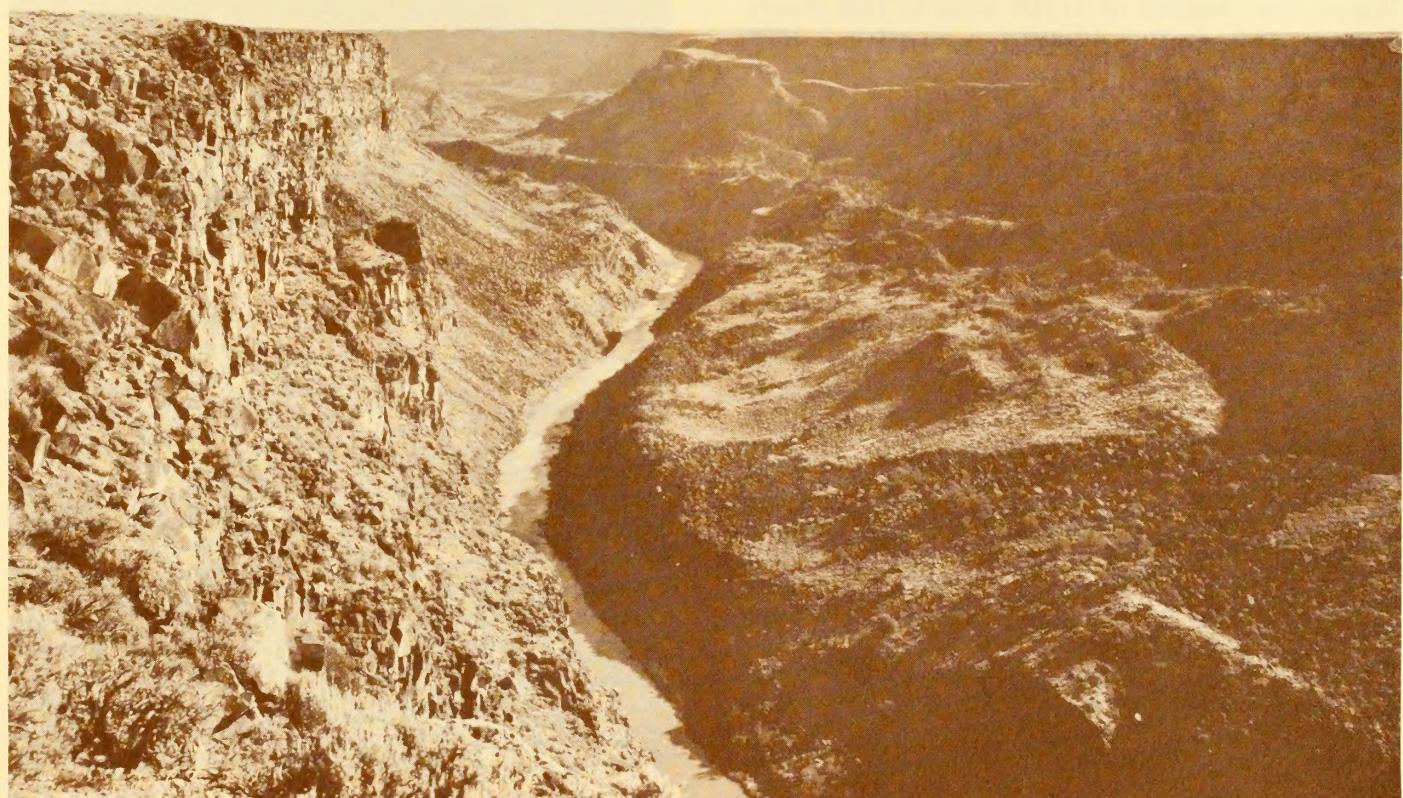
Location	Width	Depth
Colorado-New Mexico State line	1,300 feet	200 feet
Chiflo Mountain	1,300 feet	300 feet
Rio Grande upstream from the confluence of the Red River	4,000 feet	800 feet
Red River at its mouth	1,600 feet	800 feet
Arroyo Hondo Crossing	1,300 feet	500 feet
Taos Junction Bridge	1,700 feet	700 feet

Average gradient of the Rio Grande within the Wild River Area is 22 feet per mile. Total fall between the Colorado-New Mexico State line and Taos Junction bridge is about 1,500 feet. Gradients range from 12 feet per mile to 150 feet per mile. Maximum drop in the canyon lies between the junctions of the Red River and a point 12 miles upstream near the mouth of Latir creek. This 12 mile section has a total fall of 650 feet. It is on this stretch that the Arsenic Spring flows enter to create a magnificent fishery.

Riverbed and riverbed materials are identical -- predominantly basalt and other volcanic rocks. Jumbled masses of large angular boulders and block lava are common. Except for short passages, hiking along the riverbank is difficult. Numerous large, water polished boulders and deep potholes in the riverbed restrict wading. These boulders are extremely hazardous to waders.



*Foot trail makes a precarious descent into the Gorge at La Junta Point*



# LAND OWNERSHIP

## SPANISH GRANTS UNSURVEYED

In the upper Rio Grande, there is a complex pattern of land ownership, as shown on the fold-out map. This pattern bears importantly upon the classification, boundaries, development, and management of the Wild Rivers Area.

The general categories of ownership are: Federal, State, private, and Indian.

The Federal lands consist of public domain and National Forest. The public domain lands are administered by the Albuquerque district of the Bureau of Land Management. The National Forest lands are a part of the Carson National Forest. The Indian lands are administered by the Taos Tribal Council and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

In the general category of private lands, there are patented lands originating from the public domain; patented lands originating from Royal Spanish land grants; and patented lands originating from Mexican grants. Three such grants are on the east bank of the Rio Grande and are within the boundaries of the Wild River Area. They are:

*The Sangre de Cristo Grant* - granted on December 30, 1843, by Manuel Armijo, Territorial Governor, to Luis Lee and Narciso Beaubien. Original area consisted of 228,636 acres in Taos county and 998,780 in Costilla county, Colorado. Patent issued by the United States to family and heirs on December 20, 1880.

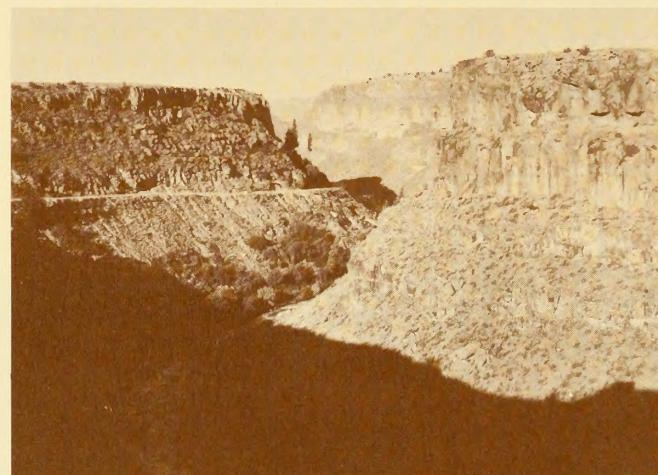
*Antonio Martinez de Godoi Grant* - granted on October 26, 1716, by Feliz Martinez, Governor and Capitan General of the Royal Province of New Mexico, to Francisco Martinez. Original area consisted of 61,605 acres in Taos county. Patent issued by the United States to heirs on May 8, 1896.

*Anton Leroux Grant (Los Luceros Grant)* - granted on August 12, 1742, by Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza, Governor of the Royal Province of New Mexico, to Pedro V. de Santillana. Original area consisted of 56,428 acres in Taos county. Patent issued by the United States to heirs on August 1, 1911.

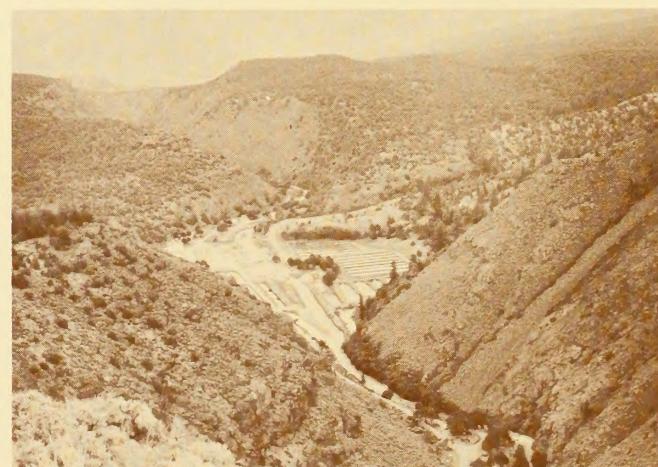
These land grants are unsurveyed (except for exterior boundary lines), and occupied by families who practice the age-old custom of land division among sons and daughters. It is doubtful that title, easements, or rights of way could be obtained voluntarily for wild river purposes.

There are two types of State land in the area. One type is administered by the Commissioner of Public Lands. In this category are scattered sections of in-place "school land" and other parcels containing several square miles of State land acquired through lieu selections and exchanges. These lands are subject to State lease for specific uses such as grazing, public hunting and fishing, oil and gas production, or exploration.

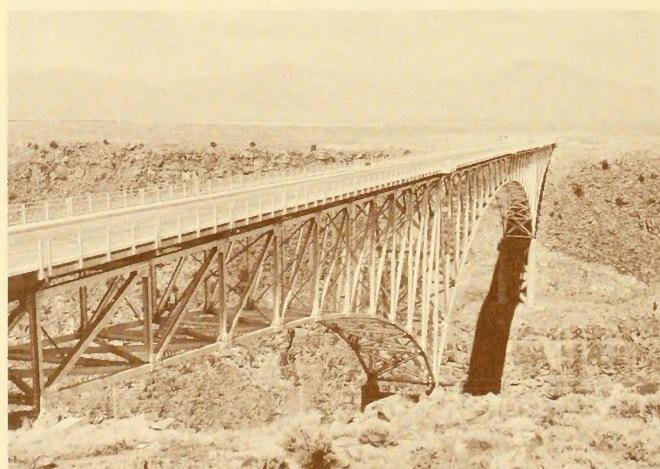
The second type of State lands are those patented to other departments or commissions of the State government. These lands are in T. 28 N., R 12 E. (Red River Hatchery) patented to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish; and in T. 24 N., R. 11 E., patented under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act to the New Mexico State Park and Recreation Commission.



Taos Creek approaches Rio Gorge



State Fish Hatchery on the Red River



Looking across the Rio Grande Gorge High Bridge



## RIVER CLASSIFICATIONS

### WILD

Classification of roughly 98 per cent of the Rio Grande and Red River segments as Wild River Areas is consistent with criteria set forth in Section 2(b) of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. These river segments -- within the boundary limit set forth in the Act -- are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by foot trail, with shorelines essentially primitive and waters essentially unpolluted.

### RECREATIONAL

Three areas aggregating about 2 percent of the Rio Grande and Red River segments are easily accessible by automobile and are now heavily used for recreation. They therefore are classified for recreation.

### SCENIC

The entire wild river area is scenic. But the other classifications will provide sufficient control, thus no scenic river classification is necessary on these rivers, and neither is so classified.

### TOTAL ACRES CLASSIFIED

The foldout map shows boundaries of the Wild River Area as prescribed by Section 3(b) of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and as we classify them thereunder. They aggregate 16,880 acres as follows:

Wild River	15,622
Recreational River	1,258
Total	16,880

This is within the maximum permissible under the 320 acre limitations of Sec. 3(b) of the Act which is 16,880 acres.

## PROPOSED WILD RIVER CLASSIFICATION (All lands except Carson National Forest)

T. 32 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 24, Lots 5 and 10;  
Sec. 25, Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8;  
Sec. 36, Lots 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
420 acres in the Sangre de Cristo Grant meandering east boundary of the Rio Grande.

T. 31 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 1, Lots 4, 5, and 6;  
Sec. 2, Lots 7, 8 and 9;  
Sec. 11, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8;  
Sec. 14, E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 23, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$  and NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 24, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$   
Sec. 25, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 26, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
250 acres of the Sangre de Cristo Grant meandering the east boundary of the Rio Grande.

T. 31 N., R. 12 E.,  
Sec. 30, Lot 4 and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 31, Lots 1, 3, 4, E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ , W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 30 N., R. 12 E.  
Sec. 6, Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$   
Sec. 7, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 17, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 18, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 19, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 20, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$   
Sec. 29, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 30, NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 32, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 29 N., R. 12 E.,  
Sec. 4, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 5, Lots 2, 3, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 8, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 9, Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 16, Lots 2 and one tract of unsurveyed land in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  containing 69.92 acres;  
Sec. 17, Lots 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, and one tract of unsurveyed land in the E $\frac{1}{2}$  containing 98.54 acres;  
Sec. 20, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and one tract of unsurveyed land in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  containing 16.38 acres;  
Sec. 29, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 30, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 31, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 32, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 28 N., R. 12 E.,  
Sec. 5, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 6, Lots 2, 3, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 7, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 8, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 9, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 10, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and NW $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 16, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and NW $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 17, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 18, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 19, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 20, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 29, portion west of river;  
Sec. 30, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 31, W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 32, portion west of river;  
Plus all other undescribed land meandering west boundary of the

Rio Grande.

T. 27 N., R. 12 E.,  
Sec. 5, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 7, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 8, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 17, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 18, E $\frac{1}{2}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 19, W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 30, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Plus all other undescribed land meandering the west boundary of the Rio Grande.

T. 26 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 1, Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 12, Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4;  
Sec. 13, Lots 1 and 2;  
Sec. 14, Lots 1, 2, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 23, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 24, Lot 1;  
Sec. 25, Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8;  
Sec. 26, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 35, Lots 1, 2 and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 36, Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8;  
430 acres of the Anton Leroux Grant meandering the east boundary of the Rio Grande.

T. 25 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 1, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8;  
Sec. 12, Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8;  
Sec. 13, Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4;  
Sec. 23, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 24, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 25, Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4;  
Sec. 26, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

## PROPOSED RECREATIONAL RIVER CLASSIFICATION (All lands except Carson National Forest)

T. 27 N., R. 12 E.,  
Sec. 30, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 31, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
130 acres of the Anton Leroux Grant meandering the east boundary of the Rio Grande.

T. 27 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 36, Lots 5, 6, and 7.

T. 25 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 35, Lots 1, 2, 3, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 36, Lots 1 and 2.

T. 24 N., R. 11 E.,  
Sec. 2, Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

## CARSON NATIONAL FOREST

Beginning at a point in the center of the Rio Grande on the section line between sections 7 and 18, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., New Mexico Principal Meridian; thence east along the section line .16 mile to the east rim of the Rio Grande canyon; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Rio Grande canyon through the center of section 8, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., a distance of approximately .68 mile; thence northerly approximately .50 mile to a point .07 mile east of the quarter corner between sections 5 and 8, T. 27 N., R. 12 E.; thence northerly through section 5, 1.04 miles to a point on the section line between section 5, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., and section 32, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .28 mile west of the section corner common to sections 4 and 5, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., and sections 32 and 33, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.

Thence northeasterly approximately .28 mile to the northerly rim of Garrapata canyon; thence southwesterly to the rim of the Rio Grande; thence northerly along the rim of the Rio Grande crossing the section line between sections 32 and 29 at a point .27 mile east of the section corner common to sections 29, 30, 31, and 32, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northerly along the rim of the Rio Grande canyon 1.03 miles to a point on the section line between sections 20 and 29, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .30 mile east of the section corner common to sections 19, 20, 29 and 30, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Rio Grande canyon approximately .57 mile to a point due east of the confluence of the Rio Grande and Red River; thence northeasterly .76 mile to the section corner common to sections 16, 17, 20 and 21, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.

Thence northeasterly 1.33 miles along the rim of the Red River canyon to the east 1/16 corner of the section line between section 9 and 16, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Red River canyon .95 mile to a point on the section line common to sections 9 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .35 mile south of the section corner common to sections 3, 4, 9 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence easterly along the rim of the Red River canyon and southeasterly along the rim of Lama canyon for approximately .38 mile; thence northeasterly approximately .38 mile to a point where the section line common to sections 3 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., crosses Lama canyon, which is approximately at the quarter corner of the section line between sections 3 and 10; thence east along the section line between sections 3 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., approximately .25 mile; thence northwesterly .11 mile to the center of the Red River.

Thence 3.79 miles southwest down the center of Red River to the confluence with the Rio Grande; thence southerly down the center of the Rio Grande 4.81 miles to the point of beginning.

# ACCESS TO WILD RIVER AREAS

Principal highway travel in Taos county is north-south, the result of natural barriers of mountains and the Rio Grande gorge. U. S. Highway 285 follows generally along the western boundary of the county; this stretch connects Alamosa, Colorado, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. New Mexico Highway 3 connects Fort Garland, Colorado, and Las Vegas, New Mexico.

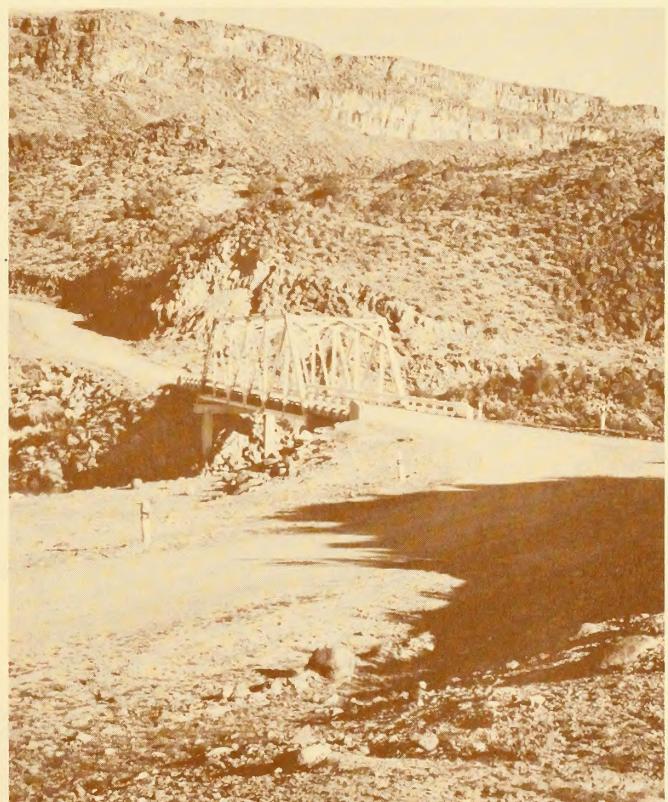
The main east-west roads are considered secondary. They are New Mexico Highways 96 (Taos Junction bridge) and 111 (Rio Grande high bridge). State 96 connects with U. S. Highway 285 at a point 21 miles south of Tres Piedras and with U. S. Highway 64 six miles south of Taos. State 111 connects with U. S. 285 at Tres Piedras with State 3 at a point ten miles north of Taos. These roads enter the Rio Grande gorge via a series of switchbacks down the canyon walls except at the high bridge.

Six miles of graveled road in the canyon paralleling the river connect U.S. 64 at Pilar with State 96 at Taos Junction bridge. The Red River fish hatchery is served by paved road from State 3 near Questa. This road also provides direct vehicular access to the upstream end of the Red River Wild River Area.

The State is improving east-west traffic flow through northern New Mexico. State 111 is being realigned and improved to connect Taos ultimately with Farmington. This route spans the Rio Grande on a bridge 1,200 feet long and 650 feet above the river. This high bridge is a popular tourist attraction. The east approach traffic count for 1968 (State Highway Department) averaged 380 cars per day, which would indicate that about 1,000 people visit the bridge every 24 hours.



*El Aguaje Trail into Red River Canyon*



*State Road 96 crossing at Taos Junction Bridge*

Population Center	Metropolitan Population, 1960 <sup>a</sup>	Distance in Miles
Taos, New Mexico	7,200	5-35
Santa Fe, New Mexico	34,700	30-90
Los Alamos, New Mexico	12,600	30-90
Las Vegas, New Mexico	13,800	30-90
Albuquerque, New Mexico	262,200	130
Raton, New Mexico	8,900	170
Pueblo, Colorado	118,700	195
Farmington, New Mexico	23,800	225
Colorado Springs, Colorado	143,800	235
El Paso, Texas	314,000	400
Amarillo, Texas	149,500	315
Denver, Colorado	929,400	325
Boulder, Colorado	70,000	375
Lubbock, Texas	156,300	390
Wichita, Kansas	343,300	550
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	511,800	580
Phoenix, Arizona	663,000	590

<sup>a</sup>/ Rounded data from 1960 Census Report.



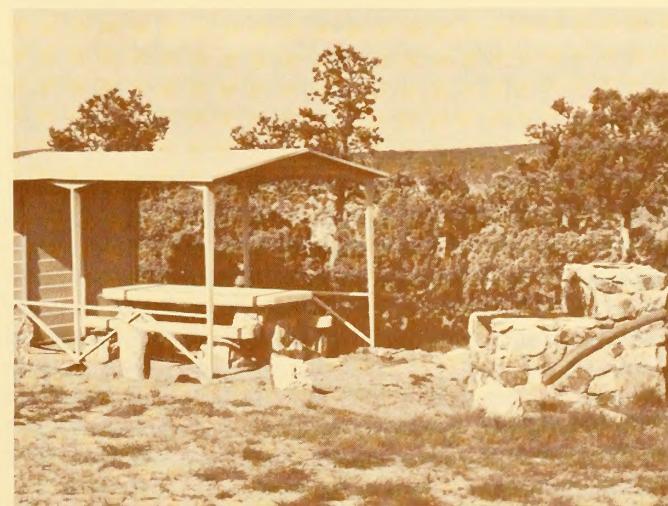
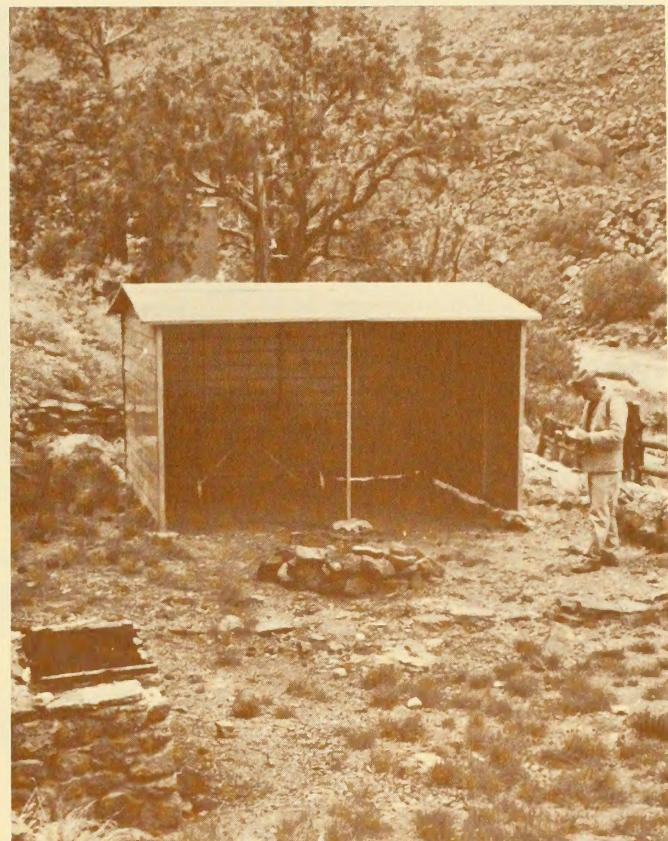
# EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES

Facilities, trails, and roads that exist west of Cerro on the Rio Grande near Questa were constructed by the Bureau of Land Management under the Accelerated Public Works Act of 1962 (Public Law 87-658). Approximately \$310,000 were spent constructing roads, trails, and facilities along the rim and in this area of the Rio Grande gorge by a work force of 120 employees secured through the State Employment Office at Taos.

The present recreation area includes 47 family units, each consisting of a shelter, table, and fireplace; 27 toilets; 11 miles of foot trails; four miles of nature trails; 15 miles of access roads; five spring improvements; several foot bridges; and playground equipment. Rock masonry was used throughout the areas for tables, fireplaces and trail barriers. The trail system was built essentially by hand. Parts for river bank metal shelters and sand and cement were carried to the bottom of the gorge by the workers and by horses.

On September 10, 1965, the 650-foot high Rio Grande gorge bridge was completed, connecting State Road 3 at Taos with U. S. Highway 285 at Tres Piedras. Someday the bridge is expected to become part of a re-routed U. S. Highway 64 crossing northern New Mexico. The New Mexico State Highway Department built eight excellent public picnic units at the west end of the bridge. They consist of native stone shelters, toilets, trailer waste dump vault, and area lighting. A 720-foot well was drilled and equipped with electric pump and water distribution system. Total development cost to date exceeds \$86,000.

In addition, limited private accommodations have been available seasonally, principally at Cedar Springs and ranches scattered along the river. Private recreation facilities are not now a significant resource.





## CURRENT AND PROJECTED USE

### RECREATION

Current recreational use at established BLM facilities is primarily local. This is due, for the most part, to inadequate access elsewhere. During the spring, summer, and fall seasons over the past four years, the use on only one rim of a 15-mile segment has averaged about 30,000 units per year. The only other documented figures available on current recreational use along the wild river stretch of Rio Grande are at the State highway rest site located at the west end of the Rio Grande high bridge. Here the use averages 400,000 visits annually. We know that other undeveloped segments of the Rio Grande and Red River receive considerable use, and we estimate this use at 70,000 annual visits. Therefore, we estimate the total current annual use of the wild river portion of the Rio Grande and Red River at 500,000 visits.

The following estimates of projected use are based on a "Study of Recreation and Tourism in New Mexico" compiled by the Marplan Division of Communications Affiliates, Inc., New Mexico State Highway Department traffic counts, population trends, and ORRRC reports. These estimates are based also on the assumption that needed developments proposed in this report are constructed prior to F. Y. 1975.

#### Estimated Recreation Demand

1975	1980	1990	2000
1,500,000	1,900,000	3,400,000	4,900,000

## MINING

There are numerous placer mining claims located along the river in the Wild River Area (Townships 25 through 32 N., Ranges 11 and 12 E.). Nearly all these claims were located 40 to 80 years ago. The locators or their heirs have no apparent current interest in these claims. There are newer placer claims to which the right to mine has been revoked under P. L. 359. (See map.) A complete investigation of each of the mining claims in the report area has not been attempted.

There are only two mining operations now with any potential impact on the Wild River Area. They are a perlite operation three miles west of the Rio Grande near Questa and a molybdenum mine six to ten miles east of Questa. Note detailed comments below:

There have been various reports on, and attempts to recover, placer golds from the gravel deposits and flood plains along the Rio Grande and Red River. The main activity was along the Rio Grande south of the Wild River Area near Pilar and Glenwoody in the early part of this century. Although gold was extracted, it was not profitable mining, judging from the history of the area, nor is it expected that placer gold mining will be profitable here in the future.

About three miles west of the river near Cerro de la Olla lies the eastern end of the No Agua perlite deposit. There are currently three different mining operations on this deposit. United Perlite has active mining claims and leases on private land in the eastern portion of this deposit. Their mine and plant are located in T. 29 N., R. 11 E., NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 34.

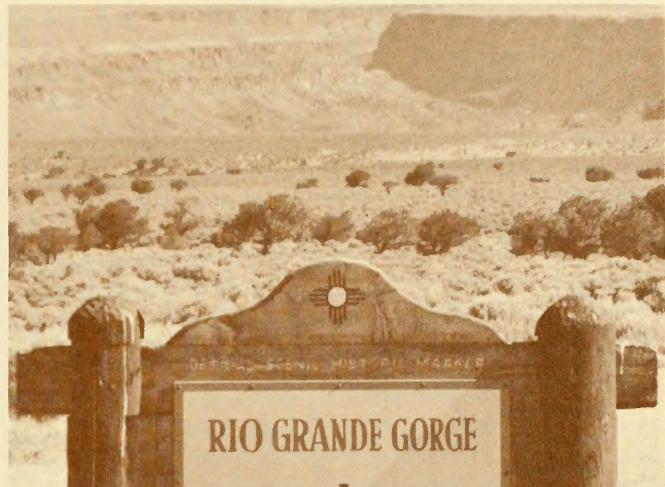
The No Agua mining district extends from U.S. Highway 285 north of Tres Piedras easterly to Cerro de la Olla. It is the principal producer of perlite in the United States.

There are reports of agate and occurrences of staurolite in and near the Wild River Area.

The only currently known or prospective mining operation in the vicinity of the Wild River Area is the perlite operation just described, and plans for construction of tailing disposal ponds in Twps. 29 and 30 N., R. 12 E., by the Molybdenum Corporation of America. To use these ponds, the company has requested a right of way over public lands. Other routes are possible but less attractive to the company.

Moly Corporation plans to mill 18,000 tons per day by September 1969, a 50 percent increase over previous production. This is the rate which can be sustained by water rights now held by the company. Company officials believe that by 1978 production will stabilize somewhere between 18,000 and 50,000 tons per day. About 99 percent of the mined material will be deposited in the proposed tailings ponds. The company has reserves of more than 500,000,000 tons of mineable ore.

Company officials have said that if production is increased to near a maximum of 50,000 tons per day a new mill probably will be built near Questa or Cerro.



A present tailings disposal area is nearly full. Moly Corporation wants to use the proposed new tailings ponds by March of 1970 to continue into September 1969 level of operation. They plan initially to construct two ponds of about 600 acres and to transport mill discharge through three 20-inch pipelines from the existing tailings pond to the new ponds. The new ponds would be used alternately for about four years. When a pond was not in use, it would be dredged and readied for re-use. Anticipated life of the first two ponds would be 15 to 20 years. The company has said the tailings area would be covered with fill dirt and reseeded when the ponds are abandoned, leaving an elevated mound 40 to 50 feet above the present terrain.

Other tailings areas could be developed north of the first two on portions of the 3,700 acres held by the company if needed.

The company has proposed to discharge decant water from the projected tailing ponds into the wild river stretch of the Rio Grande instead of returning it to its present outlet into Red River above the Wild River Area. To discharge into the Rio Grande probably will require an easement from the Bureau of Land Management. We will reject any such application. We also will object to decant discharge which would threaten water quality. Moly-Corp mill operations require about 5,600 gallons of water per minute from Red River, and from wells, to sustain the output on 18,000 tons per day. Water to be used in any further production increase would have to be met by recirculation of mill discharge water since chances for obtaining rights to further Red River water are remote.

Moly-Corp will discharge about 3,000 gallons per minute from the tailings area into Red River after the September 1969 production increase. Previous discharge has been 2,000 gallons per minute.

Water quality tests have been run on the tailings decant water by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the Ground Water Division of U.S. Geological Survey. The results showed no observable detrimental effects upon fish or plant life in Red River at the time.<sup>1</sup> Moly-Corp asserts that all chemical additives used in the milling process are recovered with the metal concentrates and that the chemical composition of the tailings decant water is essentially the same as the water entering the mill. This assertion was confirmed by John Wright, New Mexico State Health Officer, after an investigation.



## WILDLIFE

Waterfowl occur in restricted numbers within the Wild Rivers Area. Mallard, teal and merganser are the most common species. These birds are found both on the river and in natural pot holes and stock water ponds along the rim of the canyon. Hunter harvest is slight.

The major game bird species is the mourning dove. A few quail are found within the lower portion of the area. Sports hunting of doves is minor.

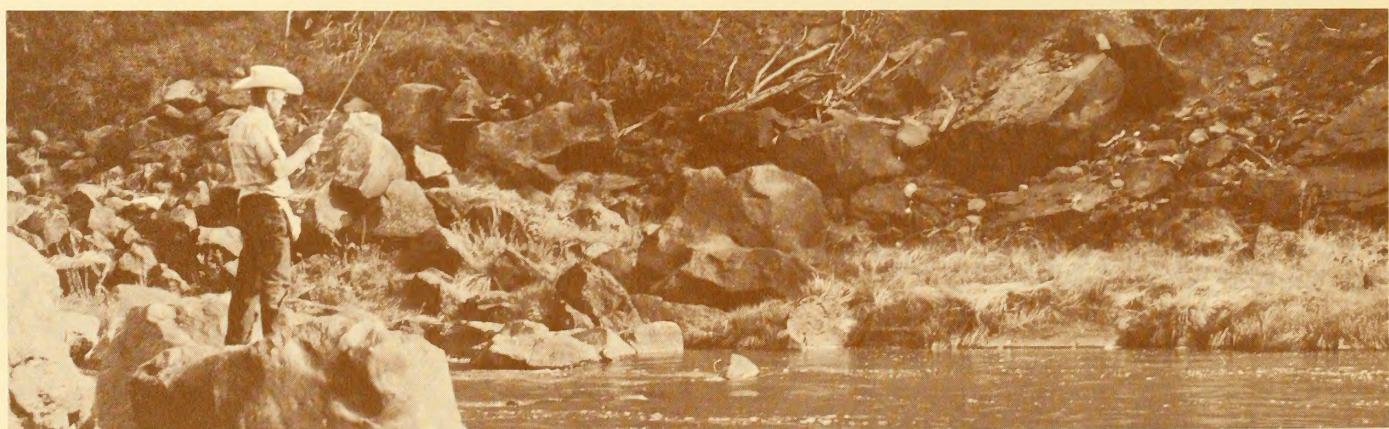
Quality fishing is the major wildlife value of the Wild River Area. Brown and rainbow trout ranging from 2 to 16 pounds have been caught. Stream habitat and water quality are good. Smallmouth bass have been of minor importance to this fishery. Non-game species include white sucker, Rio

Grande sucker, river carpsucker, carp, longnose dace and flathead chub. There are no comprehensive fisheries data pertinent to these rivers in this area.

Non-game species include numerous varieties of song bird, raptors, mammalian predators and rodents. The occasional occurrence of the mountain lion is of interest.

Deer are the most important big game animals found within the proposed boundaries of the Wild River Area. One-thousand deer are estimated to be resident within these boundaries. Deer hunting provides annually for an estimated 320 hunter days.

Antelope habitat, extending from the western boundary, supports a herd of 750 antelope. This herd sustains an approximate annual harvest of 70 head and provides an estimated 180 hunter days per year.



## LIVESTOCK

Grazing of domestic livestock has been one of the historic uses of the Rio Grande Wild River Area. Currently, 1,336 cattle and sheep are grazed within the area on seven BLM-administered allotments and on contiguous lands during varying seasons of the year. Figures for grazing on Indian, Forest Service, and private lands were not available in time for this report.

We propose to fence the east rim of the Rio Grande gorge from the Sheep Crossing Recreation Site to the existing fences above Big Arsenic Springs Recreation Site. This same fence would prevent livestock from using Sheep Crossing, Chiflo, and Bear Trails as access to the Rio Grande for water. Also necessary for grazing management, but of no impact on recreation, would be a series of interior allotment pasture fences.

Since livestock would be prevented from watering in the Rio Grande gorge, an alternate water supply should be developed above the rim. The necessary livestock water for the J.E. Rael & sons allotment (east block) can be provided by the well proposed for the Chiflo Recreation Site on the rim. The well which will provide water on the rim for the Big and Little Arsenic Springs, La Junta, and El Aguaje Recreation Sites also could be used to provide livestock water for the J. P. Rael (east block) and the combined pasture of J. P. and J. E. Rael.

## RANGE PROBLEMS

J. P. Rael and J. E. Rael trail livestock across the Rio Grande to allotments on the west side of the river. We are developing allotment management plans on the Rael allotments. These plans will provide for trailing on the Sheep Crossing Trail when cattle are moved from one allotment to another across the Rio Grande in accordance with the grazing schedules of the allotment management plans. This trailing will be authorized by crossing permit. Cattle will not be allowed to use the east side of the Sheep Crossing Trail for daily watering purposes after the fence is constructed.

Additional cattleguards and some fencing may be required in connection with the recreation road proposed to be constructed along the Red River rim from Questa to El Aguaje Recreation Site. Location of these projects will depend on road location.

The area along the east side of the Rio Grande from the north boundary of the J. E. Rael allotment to the south boundary of the Ortega brothers allotment is primarily State land and is not in any BLM grazing allotment. We do not have information on the livestock use for this area.





# DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

An overall problem is to develop the river's potential for recreation, and to do it in the midst of extensive existing other land use, ownership, jurisdictional, and physical complexities. The task is to expand recreation as a use, and to keep it compatible with other uses.

Several ideas for recreation development along the river are set forth in the succeeding pages. They stress a need for varying kinds of facilities and activities and for preservation of the river's wild character.

In general, as a prerequisite, scenic and access roads should be built along the rims of the Rio Grande and Red River gorges. About 15 miles of new and upgraded access road are needed to provide a loop from Cerro to the developed camping and picnicking areas along this stretch of canyon rim and thence to the all-weather highway at Questa.

Also needed is a scenic drive of about nine miles along the west rim several miles to the south to connect the Rio Grande gorge bridge with the Taos Junction bridge. The road system would be the most expensive proposed development and would tie together almost all developments proposed herein.

We propose also to build 66 camping and picnicking units, drill two wells and equip them with water distribution systems; two visitor interpretive centers; overlooks, and eight miles of foot trails along the Rio Grande and Red River canyons to supplement existing trails.

Forest Service proposals, in preparation too late for this report, cover approximately eight miles of the east and south banks of the Rio Grande and Red River at their confluence, both within the Carson National Forest. (See copy of letter in appendix.) They are expected to cost roughly \$400,000.

The New Mexico State Park and Recreation Commission proposes to develop 20 camping/picnicking units, water system, sanitary facilities, and playgrounds adjacent to the southern boundary of the Wild River Area.

## TAOS INDIAN PARTICIPATION

The Taos Pueblo Indians have discussed the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and have indicated an interest in further discussion of the provisions of the Act. After the Taos Pueblo governing body has discussed the Act more thoroughly, they may feel it is to public and Tribal advantage to administer certain portions of Taos Pueblo Indian land in accordance with aims of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

As nearly as can be determined now, administration of Taos Indian-owned land under the Act would not conflict with existing Tribal development plans. The development of additional information is essential to future Tribal planning.

Further development of the Rio Grande Wild River Area can take two forms. First, it can upgrade and expand existing facilities on the rims and on the canyon bottoms. Second, it can build roads and facilities where none now exist. We recommend both. The following section of this

report covers the upgrading and expansion of existing facilities. We will first describe existing facilities in detail and then add proposed work. Existing and proposed facilities are identified in the narrative and on pertinent maps.

Certain of the proposals apply to all work to be undertaken, whether on existing or new sites. Rather than repeat them for each site, they are listed here as applying over all.

Electric lines will be placed underground within campgrounds. No overhead electric power lines serving campgrounds or other proposed facilities will be permitted to approach closer than one-fourth mile to improved or potentially-improved recreation areas. No new power line or highway right of way through the Wild River Area will be granted by BLM without careful prior study of its impact on wild river values. Existing power transmission lines will be left in place. Electric lights will be installed on BLM-managed improvements only at toilets and hydrants, unless need for other lights is proven by experience.

Charcoal broilers proposed are standard swivel-type on fixed posts, about 36 inches above ground with adjustable grates.

Existing fireplaces without grills will remain at approved sites for bonfires or cooking, primarily by campers.

Some existing BLM shelters have gaps along the bottoms of the sides; others are fully closed by siding. All such gaps would be filled by additional siding. Some shelters would be closed on additional sides as needed to make them conform to overall standards for the area.

All 50-gallon refuse drums now in use would be replaced with garbage cans of approved type and in numbers sufficient to meet needs.

## BOUNDARY PROBLEMS

Protection of the scenic and wild river values of the Rio Grande and Red River requires preservation of their trenches from rim to rim, and for about one-fourth mile back from the rims on both sides of the rivers. In narrow stretches, the 320-acre-per-mile boundary limitations imposed by the Act permits this. In others, where the rims are up to two miles apart, the limitation leaves rim areas and benches without protection from other forms of land appropriation. It will be necessary therefore to take steps to affirm control beyond the boundaries classified herein.

Where the lands outside the boundaries already are in Federal ownership, only administrative procedures are necessary to do this. These lands should be protected to the same extent as lands within the wild river boundaries.

On private lands the protection, even within the quarter-mile limit, may be difficult to assert. Legal steps should be undertaken timely to perfect private-land controls which may have been created for the administering agency under the Act.

Such control, if it can be gained, should extend outward from the river to the rims and a short distance beyond in order to be consistent with management on the public lands.

# EXISTING SITES DESCRIBED

**SHEEP CROSSING CAMPGROUND** consists of two family units (metal shelter, concrete table, rock fireplace) and two wooden pit toilets on the rim. An undeveloped trail leads to the river. There are no improvements below the rim at this site.

#### Legal Description

T. 29 N., R. 12 E., Section 16, NW $\frac{1}{4}$

**Elevation** - 7,442 feet

#### Access

Two and one-eighth miles of unimproved dirt from Cerro.

#### Recommendations

Removal of existing improvements. Site is marginal and not suitable for expansion. Maintenance and cleanup costs for a site of this low quality are too high to justify.

Improve foot trail into gorge. Connect sheep crossing and Chiflo campground by trail along canyon bottom. Distance about one mile. Estimated cost - \$5,500.

**CHIFLO CAMPGROUND** consists of four family units and two metal pit toilets on the rim and two units on the canyon bottom. The river sites are reached by improved trail 3/4 mile from the rim. There are no toilets below the rim at this site.

#### Legal Description

T. 29 N., R. 12 E., Section 20, NE $\frac{1}{4}$

**Elevation** - 7,486 feet

#### Access

Three miles of unimproved road from Cerro.

#### Recommendations (Rim Area)

Install six family units.

Install 10 charcoal broilers.

Construct one vault-type double toilet to replace two existing pit types.

Drill water well and equip with electric pump. Power for well and lights will be required. Lights will be needed at toilet and at water hydrants. Livestock will be fenced from improved trails and thereby from water. This well could also be used to furnish livestock water via pipelines to adjacent cattle allotments.

Estimated proposed development cost, without water lines and drinking troughs for livestock, \$43,000.

#### Recommendations (Gorge Area)

Remove existing shelters, tables and garbage cans from canyon bottom. The trail to the river is well developed and comparatively short (3/4 mile). It is not necessary to provide overnight shelters at this point.

Improve spring at foot of trail so it would be suitable for human use.

Estimated cost of all proposed work, \$1,000.

**BIG ARSENIC SPRINGS CAMPGROUND** consists of six family units and four metal pit toilets on rim, and six units and five metal pit toilets on floor of gorge. An improved foot trail four miles long connects the improvements on the rim with those in the canyon and with other river bank areas to the south.

#### Legal Description

T. 28 N., R. 12 E., Section 8, E $\frac{1}{2}$

**Elevation** - 7,500 feet

#### Access

Eight and three-fourths miles of unimproved road from Cerro.

#### Recommendations (Rim Area)

Install 14 family units.

Install 24 charcoal broilers.

Construct three vault-type double toilets to replace four existing single pit toilets.

Drill water well at proposed J. P. Rael site and equip with electric pump.

If enough water is available here, distribute to the Little Arsenic, La Junta, and El Aguajo sites.

Construct one large shelter for group use within this site. Equip with four charcoal broilers and four garbage cans. Locate vault-type double toilets near this shelter.

Estimated total cost, \$85,000.

#### Recommendations (Gorge Area)

Install garbage cans and central covered garbage pit.

Rebuild six rock and cement fireplaces.

Refinish wooden top picnic tables in existing shelters.

Add two sides to one existing shelter.

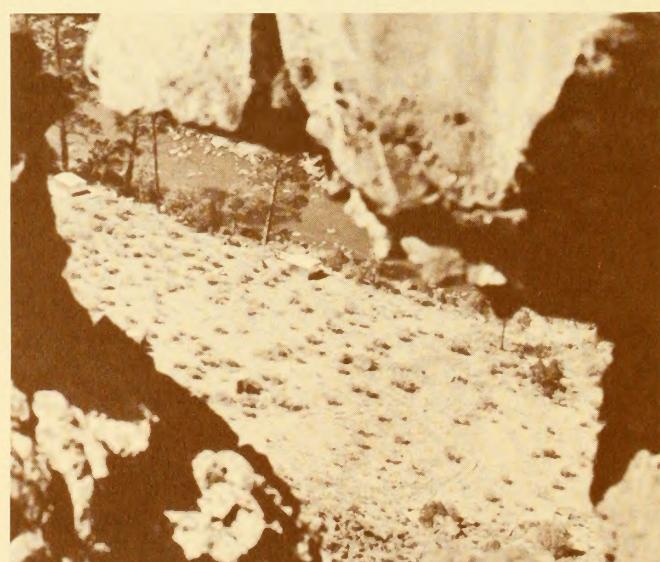
Relocate two existing toilets closer to shelters.

Develop two spring sites to keep water free of contamination.

Remove several large pine snags.

Repair and extend branch trails to shelters and toilets in the site.

Estimated total cost, \$5,000.



Big Arsenic Site on River from Chawalauna (Hole in Rock) on Rim

## **LITTLE ARSENIC SPRINGS CAMPGROUND**

consists of five family units and four metal pit toilets on rim, and five units and three metal pit toilets near river in canyon. An improved foot trail one mile long connects the improvements on the rim with those in the canyon and connects with trails leading to Big Arsenic and La Junta river sites.

### **Legal Description**

T. 28 N., R. 12 E., Section 17, E½NW¼, NE¼

**Elevation** - 7,400 feet

### **Access**

Nine and one-half miles of unimproved dirt road from Cerro.

### **Recommendations (Rim Area)**

Install 15 family units.  
Install 20 charcoal broilers.  
Install 22 garbage cans.  
Construct two vault-type double toilets to replace four existing single pit toilets.  
Install electric lights at toilets and water hydrants.  
Construct protective wall with railing along canyon rim as needed.  
Improve nature trail (1/4 mile) along rim and build canopy at overlook site.  
Estimated total cost, \$67,000.

### **Recommendations (Gorge Area)**

Provide garbage cans and central covered garbage pit.  
Repair five rock and cement fireplaces.  
Refinish five wooden top picnic tables.  
Add side to one shelter.  
Develop one spring to keep water free of contamination.  
Repair, relocate and extend branch trails to shelters and toilets within the site.  
Estimated total cost, \$3,500.

**LA JUNTA CAMPGROUND** consists of six family shelters and two metal pit toilets on the rim above junction of Rio Grande and Red River. There are three shelters and two metal pit toilets on the floor of the canyon between the two rivers. An improved foot trail 4 3/4 miles long connects the improvements on the rim with those in the canyon.

### **Legal Description**

T. 28 N., R. 12 E., Section 17, SE¼;  
Section 20, W½NW¼

**Elevation** - 7,400 feet

### **Access**

Ten miles of unimproved road from Cerro.

### **Recommendations (Rim Area)**

Install 12 family units.  
Install 24-swivel-type charcoal broilers.  
Install 24 garbage cans.  
Construct three new vault-type double toilets to replace two existing single pit toilets and to allow for increased family units and group pavilions.  
Construct two group-use shelters within the site and equip with six charcoal broilers and six garbage cans.  
Install electric lights at toilets and water hydrants.  
Erect interpretive pavilion. Describe features of wild river with diagrams and other materials.  
Build protective wall and railing as needed along rims of both canyons.  
Improve nature trail (1/4 mile) along Rio Grande rim and construct canopy at overlook.  
Estimated total cost, \$95,000.

### **Recommendations (Gorge Area)**

Provide garbage cans and central covered garbage pit.  
Rebuild three rock fireplaces.  
Refinish wooden tops of picnic tables.  
Add two more sides to all three shelters.  
Build two miles of foot trail along the bottom of Red River canyon to connect this site with upstream El Aguaje site.  
Estimated total cost, \$12,000.

**EL AGUAJE CAMPGROUND** consists of five family shelters and two metal pit toilets on the rim, and three shelters and one metal pit toilet on the floor of the canyon. An improved foot trail about one-half mile long connects improvements on the rim with those in the canyon.

### **Legal Description**

T. 28 N., R. 12 E., Section 16, NW¼

**Elevation** - 7,200 feet

### **Access**

Ten and one-half miles of unimproved road from Cerro.

### **Recommendations (Rim Area)**

Install seven family shelters.  
Install 20 swivel charcoal broilers.  
Provide 20 garbage cans.  
Construct two vault double toilets to replace two single pit toilets.

Construct two group-use shelters within this site. Equip with eight charcoal broilers, eight garbage cans, and one double toilet.

Install electric lights at toilets and water hydrants.  
Build one-half mile of protective wall and railing as needed along the rim of the Red River canyon.

Improve nature trail (1/4 mile) along rim of Red River canyon and construct canopy at overlook. Install 750 feet of protective wall and railing at canopy site.

Estimated total cost, \$85,000.

# EXISTING SITES (Continued)

## EL AGUAJE (CONTINUED)

### Recommendations (Canyon Area)

Provide three garbage cans and central covered garbage pit.

Build three rock and cement fireplaces.

Refinish wooden top picnic tables.

Add two sides to one shelter.

Add one metal pit toilet.

Build one and one-half miles of foot trail upstream along Red River to connect site with Red River fish hatchery site.

Estimated total cost, \$10,000.

## DUMP STATION NEEDED

Concrete vault dumping station to serve camping vehicles. Locate on main access between Chiflo and Big Arsenic Springs campgrounds. Station must include at least two water hydrants and electric lights.

Estimated cost, \$20,000.

## OTHER NECESSITIES

### CERRO ACCESS ROAD

Upgrade this semi-improved dirt road to all-weather standards. Must be at least 24 feet in width, with additional culverts and cattleguards, and must have asphalt surface. Improvement of 11 miles of road from Cerro to El Aguaje campground is estimated to cost \$525,000.

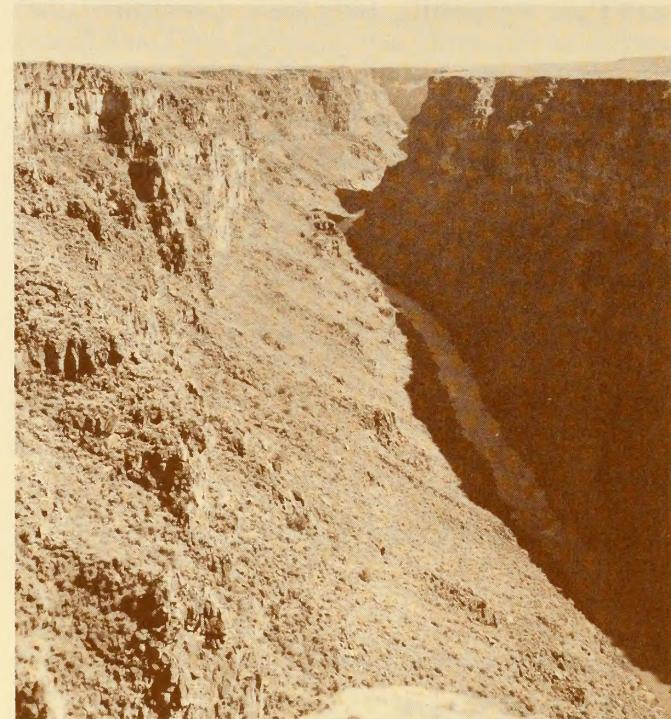
### QUESTA ACCESS ROAD

To provide direct route from Questa and State Road 3 to developed campground area, build all-weather road along the north rim of Red River canyon from Questa to connect with the Cerro road at El Aguaje campground. This must be a double-lane, 24-foot, asphalt-surfaced, all-weather road about five miles long.

Total estimated cost, \$275,000.

### RIVER VIEW SCENIC DRIVE

A road should be built to open the west rim of the gorge south from Rio Grande high bridge and connect with Taos Junction bridge. Such a route would present an excellent opportunity for visitors to enjoy features of the wild river. In addition, an interpretive pavilion, which would include diagrams of the various campgrounds, campsites, and access routes, would be constructed. Three overlook sites should be placed along the route with canopies and protective walls or fencing. This road should be a doublelane, 24-foot, asphalt-surfaced route about nine miles long. Total estimated cost for road, interpretive pavilion and overlooks is \$510,000.



## CHAWALAUNA (WINDOW) OVERLOOK AND PICNIC SITE

This proposed development would consist of 12 family picnic units (shelter, table, garbage receptacles), one double vault toilet, and 750 feet of protective wall along the rim of the Rio Grande gorge. This spot presently is used as an overlook of the gorge in the Big Arsenic Springs area. Water should be brought to the site and garbage cans provided.

Estimated total cost, \$48,000.

### Legal Description

T. 28 N., R. 12 E., Section 8, N½NE½

Elevation - 7,520 feet

### Access

Eight miles of unimproved road from Cerro.

## BEAR CROSSING TRAIL SITE

This site is about two miles south of Chiflo campground. There is an unimproved, rocky trail about one mile long, but not too steep. This trail can be improved rather easily and should be. This area is popular with fishermen. A foot trail should be built upstream along canyon floor to connect with Chiflo site. Estimated cost, \$15,000.

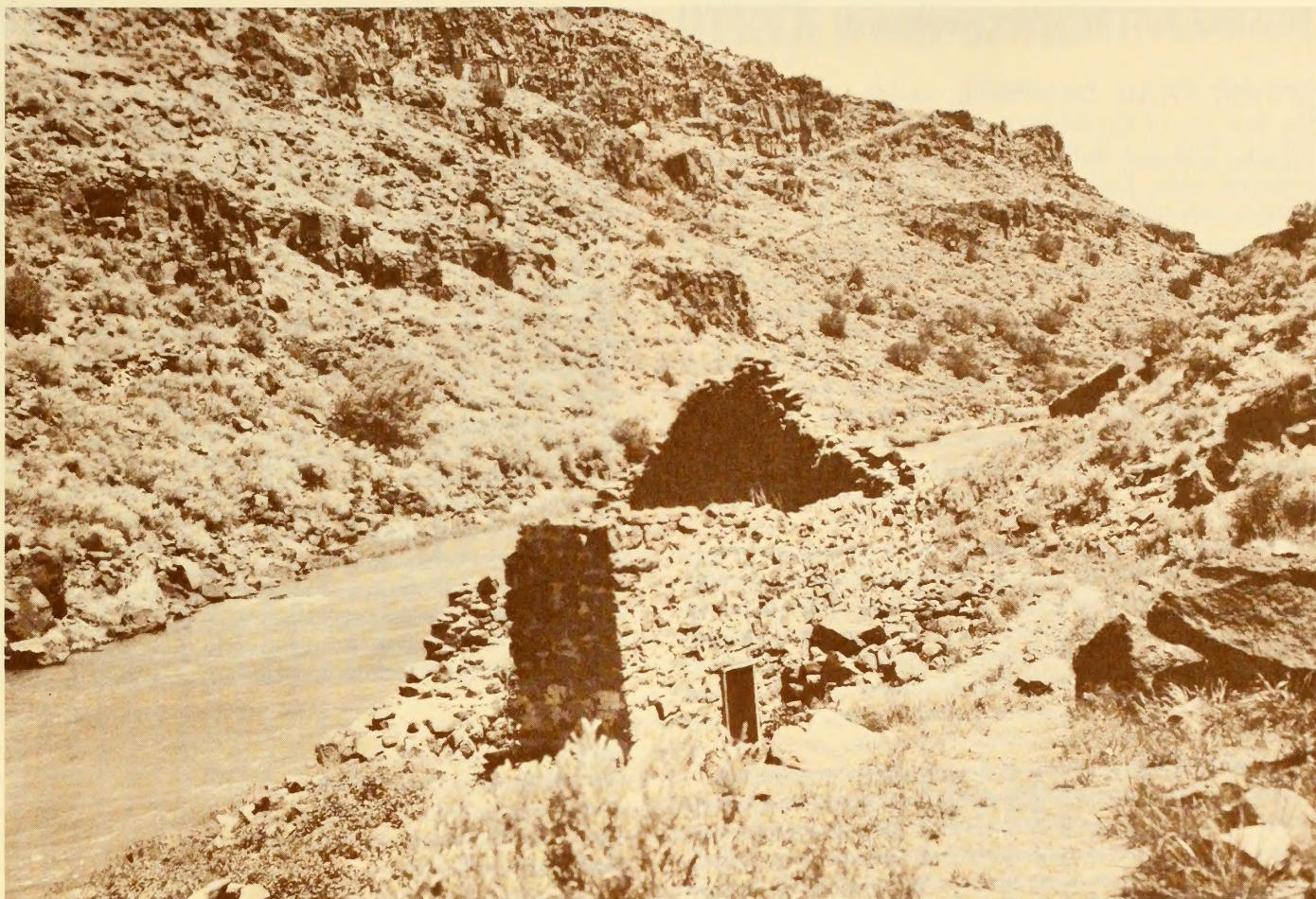
### Legal Description

T. 29 N., R. 12 E., Section 29, SW¼

Elevation - 7,450 feet

### Access

Five miles of unimproved road from Cerro.



*Manby Spring crossing*

## SITES FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

This phase of the plan covers 14 potential sites along the Rio Grande within the Wild River Area. Attention was given to sites currently popular with sportsmen and those which promise good development. Particular attention was given to ease of access, to possible picnic, camping, and parking areas, and to drinking water. Where trails exist, or are needed, they were evaluated for safety and ease of improvement.

**CEDAR SPRINGS RECREATION SITE (B-9).**  
This canyon-bottom site is about five miles north of Arroyo Hondo bridge on the west bank of the Rio Grande. A jeep road built by a mining company in 1941 now is used by the public. We propose to close it to vehicles. Some abandoned mining machinery remains near the river. There is a fresh water spring on the site near the river. Site rated excellent with many possibilities.

#### Legal Description

T. 27 N., R. 12 E., Section 5, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$   
Section 6, E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$

Elevation - 6,900 feet

**MANBY SPRING TRAILS AND CAMP SITE (B-1).**  
This site could have canyon-rim and river-bank features on the west side of the Rio Grande. Unimproved trails once were used by wagons. They could be improved for foot and horse travel without great expense; each trail about 3/4 mile in length. Several warm-water springs and old adobe-stone dwellings are on the east bank of river on the Antonio Martinez land grant. Site rated excellent.

#### Legal Description

T. 26 N., R. 11 E., Section 1, Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7  
Section 12, Lot 1

Elevation - 6,900 feet

**McCRACKEN TRAIL AND CAMP SITE (A-17).**  
This site, on the west wall of Rio Grande gorge, can be reached by a well-used trail that could be improved easily. Length of trail, about one-half mile. Good parking and shelter area locations on the rim. There is a fresh water spring near the base of the trail. (There is another unimproved trail on the opposite canyon wall. It is on the Antonio Martinez land grant.) Site rated excellent.

#### Legal Description

T. 26 N., R. 11 E., Section 13, Lots 1 and 2

Elevation - 6,800 feet

## POSSIBLE FUTURE SITES (Continued)

**SPRING TRAIL CAMPSITE (A-15).** This site, on the west side of Rio Grande gorge, is used by the public for fishing. Trail not difficult, steep, or rocky, and can be improved easily. Trail about 3/4 mile in length. Good spring water at base of trail. Site rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 26 N., R. 11 E., Section 35, Lots 1, 2, and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$   
Section 36, Lots 5, 6, 7, and 8

Elevation - 6,900 feet

**LEE TRAILS (C-5).** Located on both sides of the Rio Grande. These unimproved trails each are about 1/4 mile long and provide fairly easy access to the river. The rim area on the west side is suited for picnic or camping area use. Excellent view. Site rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 30 N., R. 12 E., Section 19, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$   
Section 20, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$

Elevation - 7,480 feet

**WEST YUTA TRAIL (C-9).** On the west wall of the Rio Grande gorge, this unimproved trail (length 400 yards) provides access to the river for fishermen and for livestock. There are several springs at the base of the trail that could be developed to provide drinking water for people. This portion of the river has excellent trout fishing in the spring and early summer months. Site rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 31 N., R. 12 E., Section 31, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, and  
E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$

Elevation - 7,475 feet

**RAY ROBINSON TRAIL (B-21).** On the west wall of the Rio Grande gorge, this unimproved trail provides access to excellent fishing. The trail is about one-half mile long, rocky and steep. Present use by public is moderate. Site rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 29 N., R. 12 E., Section 20, NW $\frac{1}{4}$

Elevation - 7,480 feet

**POWER LINE CAMPSITE AND TRAIL (A-12).** This west-side site offers good parking and camping areas on the Rio Grande rim. An unimproved trail is steep and dangerous; is in a slide rock area. It would be expensive to develop a good foot trail to the river at this location. Good fresh water spring rises near the river at the base of this trail. The trail is now used by the general public for fishing. Camp and shelter area rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 25 N., R. 11 E., Section 24, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, and  
W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$

Elevation - 6,700 feet

**ANTONIO TRAIL (C-7).** Located on the east wall of the Rio Grande gorge, this unimproved trail is about 400 yards long and provides access into a rather shallow portion of the canyon. This rim site is suited for development as a trail head parking area. Site rated good.

### Legal Description

T. 30 N., R. 12 E., Section 17, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$

Elevation - 7,460 feet

**HALF-MILE TRAIL CAMPSITE (A-14).** There is an excellent view of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the village of Taos from this west-side rim site. The trail to the river is in a very narrow canyon, is steep and dangerous, and is about one-half mile long. It is now used sparingly by the public for fishing access. The trail would be expensive to improve. Site rated fair.

### Legal Description

T. 25 N., R. 11 E., Section 1, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8

Elevation - 6,800 feet

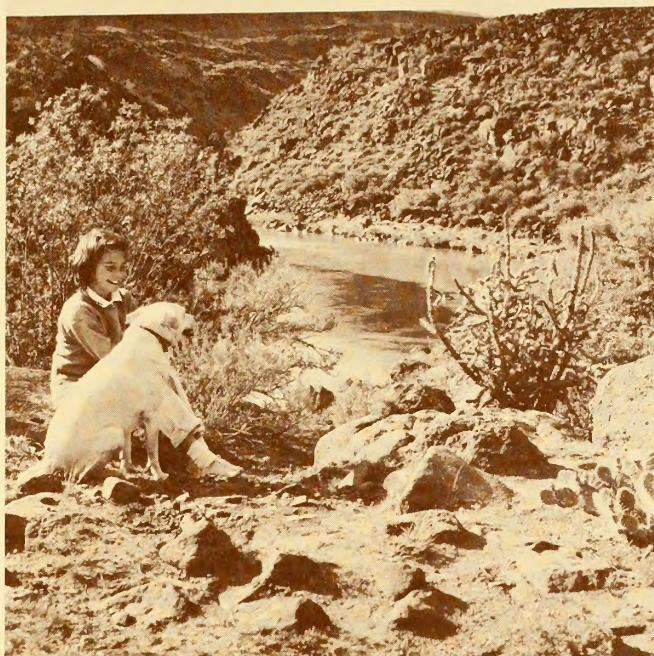
**MESITA TRAILS (C-11).** On both sides of the Rio Grande, these unimproved trails are each about one-fourth mile long and are relatively easy to travel. The rim area on the east side has potential for limited picnic or camping development. The canyon at this point is rather shallow and narrow. Site rated fair to good.

### Legal Description

T. 31 N., R. 11 E., Section 14, E $\frac{1}{2}$

Elevation - 7,500 feet

## SITES (Continued)



**SAGEBRUSH FLAT CAMPSITE (A-13).** There is a good camping, parking, and shelter area on west canyon rim. Scattered sagebrush -- no other protection. There are no springs on the rim or near the river. The trail to river is unimproved and steep, but much used by fishermen. Camp and shelter area rated fair.

### Legal Description

T. 25 N., R. 11 E., Section 12, Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8

**Elevation** - 6,700 feet

**RAVEN CAMPSITE (A-16).** On Rio Grande rim on the west side, with some natural protection, and with good camp and shelter area. The trail is not used at present but could be developed. Site is rated fair.

### Legal Description

T. 26 N., R. 11 E., Section 14, Lots 1, 2, and W½SE¼

**Elevation** - 6,900 feet

**TWO-MILE CAMPSITE (B-2).** On the Rio Grande rim on the west side. Little used due to rough, steep trail. Good space for camp and shelter areas. No water. The site is about two miles north of the Arroyo Hondo bridge. Rated fair.

### Legal Description

T. 27 N., R. 12 E., Section 19, W½

**Elevation** - 6,800 feet

## OTHER PROPOSALS

### Wildlife Management

Water quality should be maintained or improved through elimination and reduction of pollutants, and through watershed management consistent with wild river values. Watershed management should consider the impact of livestock and big game upon the watershed outside, as well as within, the Wild River Area.

Fishery studies should be initiated to provide data for better fishery management. Fishery management needs should consider stocking rates, desired species ratios, rehabilitation needs, management objectives, and appropriate regulations. Study should be cooperative with State and Federal agencies participating.

Existing fences should be modified to permit antelope to migrate freely and thus fully occupy the habitat. Feasibility of an antelope transplant to the east side of the gorge should be investigated in cooperation with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Vegetation control for wildlife habitat improvement should be restricted in the vicinity of the canyon to preserve scenic values.

Recommendations should be made to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish that they provide regulations prohibiting discharge of firearms or hunting within the Wild River Area, except during regular big and small game seasons as established through their regulatory process. Such measures would enhance public safety, protect non-game species within the area, and be consistent with State and national park policies elsewhere within New Mexico.

### Grazing Management

Following are type, number, and cost estimates for range improvements needed as result of the recreation program:

Pipeline and drinking troughs (two sites), \$2,500 each (well and storage costs under recreation water development)	\$ 5,000
Fence - 5½ miles (4-strand barbed wire)	6,000
Cattleguards (one, 12-foot wide with metal gate) (one, 24-inches wide with metal gate)	1,000 2,200
Total	\$14,200

### New Mexico Park and Recreation Commission

Before relocation of U.S. Highway 64 between Taos and Pilar, road travel went into the Rio Grande canyon via the present State Highway 96, thence south nine miles to Pilar. Today this old, gravelled road is lightly traveled. Most traffic is for recreation.

The New Mexico State Park and Recreation Commission owns several sections of the accessible lands on this road along the Rio Grande between Taos Junction bridge (the south boundary of the Wild River Area) and Pilar.

# OTHER PROPOSALS (Continued)

The 1969 State Legislature granted Park and Recreation Commission authority to sell revenue bonds for recreation development. Fifty-thousand dollars of the bond money was earmarked for development of the area between Pilar and Taos Junction bridge. In addition, another \$27,000 including Land and Water Conservation Act matching funds were to be spent there.

Initial development is programmed for State Park Site (A-1) in Section 29, T. 24 N., R. 11 E., NMPM, and Section 15, Lots 3 and 4. Site A-1 is described as being 100 yards north of Petaca canyon at an old dump site just north of Pilar.

State developments programmed for this location include 20 camping units (shelter, table, fireplace, and garbage can), sanitary facilities, drinking water, and access roads.

Several other sites north of this site are inventoried for development. They are contained in the long-range plan of the Commission. No programming has been done for sites other than Site A-1. Eventual full development of the State sites adjacent to the Wild River Area is to be expected.

## Aircraft and Air Space

No person should be permitted to operate or land within the Rio Grande Wild River Area except:

For emergencies involving the health and safety of persons and in accordance with direction from the Bureau of Land Management State Director; BLM District Manager; Regional Forester; Taos Indian officer; or their authorized representatives; when forced to land due to unforeseeable circumstances beyond the control of the operator; or on official business within their respective jurisdictions for a governmental agency when approved by the State Director of the Bureau of Land Management; Regional Forester; or Taos Indian Tribe.

Except in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons, no persons or cargo should be dropped, parachuted, or otherwise delivered from aircraft into the area within the Rio Grande wild river boundaries without written permission of the head of agency administering the wild river lands specifically involved or his authorized representative.

Except in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area, flight of aircraft should be prohibited below the level of the rim of the Rio Grande and/or Red River canyons within the wild river boundaries, and below 500 feet altitude above the ground level within the boundaries of the Rio Grande Wild River Area.

## Hunting and Fishing Areas and Seasons

Fishing and hunting areas and seasons within the boundaries of the Wild River Area now are set by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. It should continue to exercise its fish and game conservation and law enforcement duties, within the area, coordinating at all times such areas and seasons so as to keep them consistent with wild river preservation, and informing administering agencies of Department proposals and actions.

## Motorized Vehicles and/or Equipment

It should be policy within the Wild River Area that no motorized equipment and/or vehicles be allowed below the rims of the Red River and Rio Grande gorges (designated as wild) except as needed in emergencies involving human life or severe resource damage, and then only after approval by an authorized agent of the agency involved.

Use of power saws is discouraged. Use of power saws and other power machinery may be authorized to maintenance personnel for trail maintenance and construction. Power saw use will be confined, even during construction, insofar as possible, to periods when visitor presence is least.

Use of power saws by organized crews of firefighters should be permitted in the control of wild fires.

## Fire

Wild fires should be controlled as necessary to prevent unacceptable loss of wild river values, and to protect visitor facilities, and visitors.

Use of motorized, mechanical ground vehicles should be confined to those rare situations in which manpower alone cannot cope with the fire.

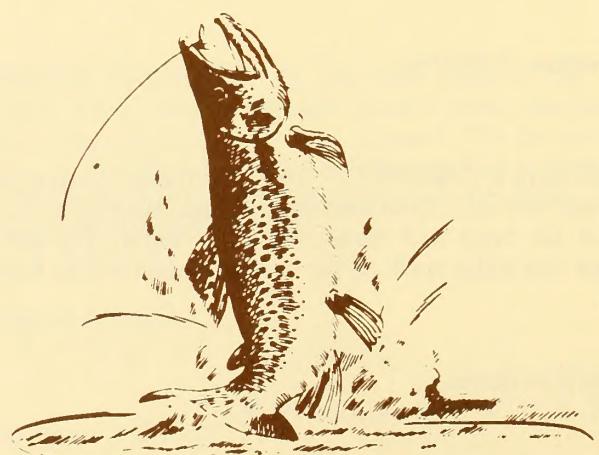
## Timber Management

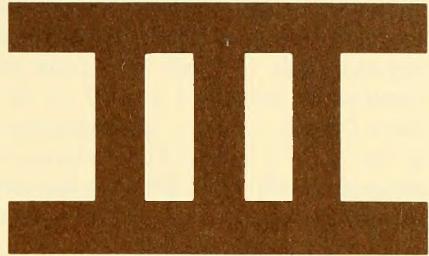
No tree harvesting or silvicultural treatment should be conducted within the boundaries of the Wild River Area.

Tree cutting should be limited to that necessary to control fire, insects or disease, or removal necessary for safety of persons, or to construct and maintain approved trails and campsites.

## Domestic Livestock

Livestock use within the confines of the Rio Grande and Red River Canyons should be discouraged. As funds permit, range improvements, especially waters and fences, should be constructed outside the Wild River Area to control and support livestock.





# NATIONAL FOREST PLAN - RIO GRANDE WILD RIVER

## INTRODUCTION

Management direction and decisions contained herein pertain only to National Forest land on the Rio Grande Wild River and designed to complement the administration and planning of the large portion of the River under management by the Bureau of Land Management.

The Rio Grande forms the western boundary of the Carson National Forest along 4.75 miles of river. In addition, the Red River forms the northern boundary of the National Forest in this area. Four miles of this river are designated as being a part of the Wild Rivers System.

With the exception of the upper .75 mile of the Red River, the remaining designated river within this plan area meets almost all qualifications for designation as a Wild River as defined in Section 2 (b) (1) of the Act. The entire length of the Rio Grande and the lower 3.25 miles of the Red River are hereby classified, designated, and will be administered as a Wild River. This area contains approximately 912 acres.

The upper .75 mile of the Red River, including .25 mile which crosses privately owned land, is hereby classified, designated, and will be administered as a Recreational River. This area contains approximately 70 acres.

Beginning at a point in the center of the Rio Grande River on the section line between sections 7 and 18, T. 27

N., R. 12 E., New Mexico Principal Meridian; thence east along the section line .16 mile to the east rim of the Rio Grande Canyon; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Rio Grande Canyon through the center of section 8, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., a distance of approximately .68 mile; thence northerly approximately .50 mile to a point .07 mile east of the quarter corner between sections 5 and 8, T. 27 N., R. 12 E.; thence northerly through section 5, 1.04 miles to a point on the section line between section 5, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., and section 32, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .28 mile west of the section corner common to sections 4 and 5, T. 27 N., R. 12 E., and sections 32 and 33, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.

Thence northeasterly approximately .28 mile to the northerly rim of Garrapata Canyon; thence southwesterly to the rim of the Rio Grande; thence northerly along the rim of the Rio Grande crossing the section line between sections 32 and 29 at a point .27 mile east of the section corner common to sections 29, 30, 31, and 32, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northerly along the rim of the Rio Grande Canyon 1.03 miles to a point on the section line between sections 20 and 29, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .30 mile east of the section corner common to sections 19, 20, 29, and 30, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Rio Grande Canyon approximately .57 mile to a point due east of the confluence of the Rio Grande and Red River; thence northeasterly .76 mile to the section corner common to sections 16, 17, 20, and 21, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.

Thence northeasterly 1.33 miles along the rim of the Red River Canyon to the east 1/16 corner of the section line between sections 9 and 16, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence northeasterly along the rim of the Red River Canyon .95 mile to a point on the section line common to sections 9 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., .35 mile south of the section corner common to sections 3, 4, 9, and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E.; thence easterly along the rim of the Red River Canyon and southeasterly along the rim of Lama Canyon for approximately .38 mile; thence northeasterly approximately .38 mile to a point where the section line common to sections 3 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., crosses Lama Canyon, which is approximately at the quarter corner of the section line between sections 3 and 10; thence east along the section line between sections 3 and 10, T. 28 N., R. 12 E., approximately .25 mile; thence northwesterly .11 mile to the center of the Red River.

Thence 3.79 miles southwest down the center of Red River to the confluence with the Rio Grande; thence southerly down the center of the Rio Grande 4.81 miles to the point of beginning.

Due to the nature of the terrain and the severance of the uppermost .5 mile of the Red River by the privately owned tract, no immediate tremendous increase in impact of public use is expected. Designation and classification of this segment as a Recreation River will allow development if and when public need demands. The privately owned tract is classified as undesirable for acquisition, since it contains extensive development as a trout hatchery. The hatchery is operated by the State of New Mexico.

Outdoor recreation is believed to be the primary purpose of visits to the Wild River. Use on the National Forest segment is estimated at 1,000 Visitor-Days now, and this is expected to increase with Wild River status of the area. Use should increase at a rate corresponding with national and local trends in outdoor recreation use. The greatest use expected of this portion of the Wild River will be sightseeing. This may be done as a special effort, or as a side benefit of other activities. Hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and picnicking should follow in that decreasing order of importance. Driving for pleasure and sightseeing from the automobile will be of concern only in access to the boundary of the Wild River. Consideration of the details inherent in providing for public use outside the designated and classified areas is not included in depth herein. Where such considerations are germane, they are discussed with those resource management activities to which they closely relate.

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

This area is considered a Special Management Zone within the Multiple Use Plan for the Questa Ranger District, Carson National Forest. It will be managed to preserve the rivers in their natural, primitive condition. All public use of the area and the resources it contains will be regulated and managed to this end.

## MANAGEMENT SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

Public use of the designated area has not been significant, nor has this use materially altered the environs of the River. With designation, more people will be motivated to visit the area. A large percentage of visitors will be from without the local area. Local residents are already familiar with the River and its canyons and will be less impressed by its classification as a Wild River. As public use increases, attendant problems of sanitation and public safety will become more pressing. Public access is insured by Federal ownership of all land involved, but standards of roads and trails will have to be upgraded to accommodate the expected increase in use.

### Minerals

No known mining claims exist in the designated area. If any are discovered, they will be evaluated within the framework of Sections 9 (a) (i) and (ii) of the Act.

### Water

Water quality is now acceptable under standards established by the Wild Rivers Act. However, there is currently a degree of pollution from the communities of Red River and Questa. In addition to occasional industrial pollution from the Molybdenum Mine in upper Red River Canyon, the expansion of these communities could affect water quality.

During periods of heavy precipitation, mud flows from unique geological formations known as hydrothermal pipes in upper Red River Canyon may greatly affect water quality for a period of several days after a storm.

Water from Red River is used by New Mexico Department of Game and Fish at the fish hatchery.

Siltation is contributed to the Rio Grande by almost every tributary. This is most noticeable during high runoff periods in the spring. Chemical pollution has not been and is not expected to be a problem.

## Range

Two grazing allotments, La Lama and San Cristobal, are slightly affected by the Wild River classification. The area under the Rio Grande rim is too rough and rugged to be used by domestic livestock.

The limited range resource has its greatest value for uses other than the grazing of domestic livestock.

## Wildlife

One of the main attractions of the Rio Grande and the Red River immediately below the Fish Hatchery is its fine trout fishing. These streams have a reputation for producing large rainbow and German brown trout. The excellence of this fishing has often been publicized in national sports magazines. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish plants fingerling trout within this portion of the Wild Rivers. Stocking has been accomplished by packing in.

Hunting pressures within the Rio Grande and Red River Canyons are generally light because of poor access and rugged terrain. Little game inhabits the flat mesas above the Rim.

No rare or endangered wildlife species have been observed. Golden eagles are common in this area.

## Timber

The majority of the National Forest area is covered with noncommercial stands of pinon, pine, and juniper. The demand for fuelwood in the Questa, San Cristobal, and Arroyo Hondo areas is very high. Commercial species such as ponderosa pine and Douglas fir can be found on better soil sites within the Canyon but are considered to be noncommercial because of lack of access and limited volumes. On-site timber has its greatest value for esthetic purposes.

## Outdoor Recreation

There are two inadequate recreation developments adjacent to the designated area. The National Forest Recreation Management Plan contains six inventoried potential recreation sites. Public use of the developed sites is very light, with only limited "throwdown" use taking place at other spots along the Rim. Lack of the pleasing cover type, exposure, and lack of potable water are limiting factors. The sites are used as a "jump-off" into the Canyon, and are not terminal sites. Visitors backpack into the Canyon, and some day camp for brief periods at undeveloped sites. It is estimated that most recreation use is on a one day trip basis with little overnight use within the Canyon or along the Rim.

Some fast water boating takes place on the Rio Grande. Overnight stops are not known to be made on the National Forest.



Access to and into the Rio Grande Gorge is poor. Several low standard roads provide access from State Route 3 to the edge of the Rim. Two low standard trails provide access from the roads at the Rim to the River.

It is estimated that recreation visits for all purposes totaled 2,000 for a total of 1,000 Visitor-Days.

There is one known archeological site within the unit. Since Indian ruins are common to the general area, it is probable that more sites exist. The known site is located close to the proposed walk-in camp area.

## Natural Beauty

The view of the Canyons of the Rio Grande and the Red River is spectacular from almost any vantage point. There are few detractions from the view itself. A bulldozer road across the Rio Grande, now closed, and the trails into the Canyons are visible. The pleasing mixture of cover types is an integral part of the atmosphere of the Canyon.

## Fire

Due to the vegetative type of the area, hazard is not great. There have been a total of two fires in the last 10 years. Except under the rarest of conditions, a fire could not normally sustain itself to develop into a conflagration. A small amount of hazard reduction around the more popular sites within the Canyon itself would remove almost all the risk.

Risk will increase with increased numbers of people. This should not be material, due to the fuel types. Should a large fire occur, it would materially affect the environment and desirability of the Canyons.

## Insect and Disease

No serious problems now exist. Scattered insect attacks do occur on the mature ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. All will carefully be monitored to prevent a buildup leading to the loss of the limited timber stands.



## Land Uses

The U. S. Geological Survey has a Special-Use Permit for a stream gauging station on the Red River immediately above its confluence with the Rio Grande, in the Wild River.

## Transportation

Six miles of road connect the Rim with New Mexico Highway 3 in three places. There are numerous rut roads that are fostered by the nature of the terrain along the Rim. There are three miles of system trail within the Wild River. In addition, there are six miles of nonsystem trail from road ends to and along the river. All road and trails are substandard and are in need of reconstruction. There are no helispots within the Canyon, nor any boat landings formally designated along the rivers. No road will be constructed or maintained within the designated area.

Signs within and leading to the designated area are inadequate to non-existing.

## General Administration

The Questa Ranger District now operates with a full staff, based on current workload analysis. The addition of this extra management job will demand increasing financing and personnel to develop, administer, and manage the area as it must be.

# COORDINATING REQUIREMENTS

## Minerals

1. Boundaries will be posted to notify the public of withdrawal from mineral entry. This posting will be at all points of entry and at such other places as is necessary.
2. Unperfected claims will be examined for validity.

## Water

Pollution of the rivers will be avoided in every way possible.

1. Upstream residents will be encouraged to curtail pollution which they generate.
2. Cooperation will be sought from state, local, and other federal agencies to abate pollution.
3. Sanitary improvements will be designed to keep the area free from pollution. They will be serviced often enough to maintain their effectiveness.

## Range

1. No new structural or nonstructural range improvements will be placed in the areas.
2. The area will be closed to all grazing by domestic livestock.
3. Overnight use by recreation livestock will not be allowed unless feed is provided by the user.

## Timber

1. No timber will be sold or cut for commercial purposes.
2. No firewood will be cut for removal from the area.
3. Only those trees may be cut which must be removed for public safety, fire control, insect or disease control, and for construction of approved improvements.

## Natural Beauty

1. All improvements will be made to blend as harmoniously as possible into the natural setting.
2. Trails will be located to make the least impact possible on the vistas from the opposite Canyon rim.

## Outdoor Recreation

### 1. Recreation Development Adjacent to the Wild River Area

Because of the recreation potential of the area, camping facilities will be provided on land immediately adjacent to the Wild River boundary.

A variety of types of camping facilities will be provided, offering the public varied experiences and opportunities for recreation. The way the land lies, and where the tree cover is will dictate primarily the locations and types of facilities.

Two areas lend themselves to overnight camping, and offer easy access from State Highway 3. One area that has no tree cover could be developed as a day use picnic area. Another is suited to be developed as a "walk to" overnight camping area.

Areas which seem to be most feasible to develop for overnight camping due to tree cover, accessibility by road, and the greatest possibility of finding water, are: Cedar Springs Canyon, adjacent to the Wild River boundary, and the area adjacent to the Wild River boundary in the vicinity of Alamo Canyon.

A day use area is located on Cebolla Mesa near the junction of the Rio Grande Gorge and the Red River Gorge, outside of and adjacent to the Wild River boundary.

The "walk to" overnight camping site is located in the vicinity of Garrapata Canyon, adjacent to the Wild River boundary.

A relatively small number of camping units will be built. Between ten and fifteen units will be provided in each area according to the land available. The development plan will provide, in harmony with the developed portion, a plan for expansion if and when the demand indicates the need.

The proposed day use area located on Cebolla Mesa near the junction of the Rio Grande Gorge and the Red River Gorge will be developed with an initial capacity of approximately 20 cars, expandable to approximately 40 cars ultimately. Rustic picnic shelters and tables will be provided for this area.

## 2. Recreation Development Within the Designated Area

### Vista

Rustic appearing vista points will be provided and marked allowing visitors to enjoy the ultimate views. Safety of the public will be the prime concern in the extent of construction.

### Sanitation

Appropriate sanitation improvements will become necessary as visitation increases.

### Trails

Trail maintenance and construction will be necessary. This is covered in more detail in the transportation section of this plan.

### Maintenance

Care and maintenance of the Wild and Recreation Rivers area and Forest Service facilities serving them will be provided by the Questa Ranger District.

## INSECTS AND DISEASE

1. All "faders" in groups of three or more will be checked to determine the seriousness of insect or disease attack and its threat to adjacent stands.
2. Appropriate chemical or mechanical control will be taken on any outbreak that threatens intolerable loss.
3. Mechanized equipment will not be used in control of outbreaks except power saws and hand driven pumps.

## LAND USES

1. No more land use permits will be issued within the designated Wild River.
2. Structures essential for hatchery operation may be permitted in the Recreation River.
3. When U.S.G.S. stream gauging station is no longer needed, it will be removed and the site restored.
4. Only when public need has been demonstrated will public service facilities and/or improvements be permitted on the National Forest adjacent to the designated area.
5. No Special Use Permits will be issued for commercial operations within the designated area.

## TRANSPORTATION

1. No vehicle roads will be constructed or maintained inside the boundaries of the designated Wild River.
2. Existing roads within the boundaries of the designated Recreation River will be maintained and up graded as needed.
3. Access roads to the area shall be built to a DN18 standard, ultimately paved.
4. Trails will be reconstructed or constructed to the same standard as those governing trails within the National Wilderness Preservation System.
5. Only signs essential for public safety will be installed.
6. VIS signs will be installed at developed sites outside the boundaries.
7. No helispots will be constructed within the area.
8. Only one boat landing will be allowed within the stretch of Wild River. It will include only minimum sanitation improvements.

## FIRE AND AIR OPERATIONS

1. Prompt, aggressive action will be taken on all fires occurring in the area.
2. Motorized ground equipment and transportation will not be used within the Canyons.
3. Helicopters and helitack crews and helicopter application of fire retardant may be used within the Canyons.
4. All burned area shall be promptly revegetated with appropriate grass and browse species. Soil stabilization structures may be installed as needed.
5. Except under emergency conditions, or conditions involving public health or safety, no aircraft will be landed nor paracargo dropped within the Wild River area.
6. Fixed wing aircraft will not be allowed within the Canyon rims.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1. On an interim basis, the eastern boundary of the Wild and Recreation Rivers will be posted, giving notice of its classification. These signs shall be posted at all points of entry into the area and at such other points as it may become necessary.
2. A special brochure of the designated area will be developed for public use in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management.
3. Administrative changes, as needed, will be implemented to assure best possible management of the area. This will include additional funding and personnel.



## NOTES

Form 1279-3  
(June 1984)

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